



Wives Excuse.



Wives Excuse.

THE
WIVES EXCUSE:

OR,

Cuckolds make themselves.

A
COMEDY.

As it was Acted at the

THATRE ROYAL,

By their MAJESTIES SERVANTS,
In the YEAR 1692.

Written by Mr. SOUTHERN.

*Nihil est his, qui placere volunt, tam adversarium,
quam expectatio.* Cicero.

Printed for W. MEARS, at the *Lamb*
without *Temple-Bar.* 1726.

To the Right Honourable

Tho. Wharton, Esq;

*Comptroller of His MAJESTY'S
Household.*



S I R,

EVERY Man of Fortune has the Power of doing a good Turn, but there must be more in the Man one would chuse to be oblig'd to: I have a thousand Obligations to you, and have confess'd 'em upon every Occasion: I have enjoy'd the Benefit of your Favours; and have the Pride of them yet in my Heart, that you have not thought so much good nature thrown away upon me. I would make you what amends I could, and a Dedication is all that I have in my Power to return: 'Tis a Poetical Payment indeed, which, while it discharges one Debt, is running into another, begging your Protection for a Play, which will almost need your Interest to defend: I won't contend a Point, where most voices are to carry it: But as I design'd this Play for you, when some People thought well of it, I hope it does not lessen the Present, that every Body does not. 'Tis only the Capacity and Commendation of the common Mistresses to please every Body, to whom I will leave some of my Criticks, who were affronted at Mrs. Friendall: For those Sparks, who were most offended with her Virtue in publick, are the Men that lose little by it in private; and if all the Wives in Town were of her Mind, those mettled Gentlemen

would

The Epistle Dedicatory.

would be found to have the least to do, in making 'em otherwise: But if she was of evil Example, *Witwood* makes amends for her, in the Moral of her Character; where the Women are manifestly safer in the Possession of a Lover, than in the Trust and Confidence of a Friend: But she was no more understood to the Advantage of the Men, than the Wife was receiv'd in Favour of the Women. As to the Musick-Meeting, I always thought it an Entertainment reasonably grown up into the liking of the Town: I introduc'd it, as a fashionable Scene of bringing good Company together, without a Design of abusing what every Body likes; being in my Temper so far from disturbing a publick Pleasure, that I would establish twenty more of them, if I could: And for the *Billet-doux*, that was put into Mrs. *Sightly's* Hand, upon leading her out, I have heard of such a thing in a Church before now, and never thought the worse of the Place.

These, Sir, are capital Objections against me; but they hit very few Faults: Nor have they mortify'd me into a Despair of pleasing the more reasonable Part of Mankind. If Mr. *Dryden's* Judgment goes for any thing, I have it on my Side: For, speaking of this Play, he has publickly said, the Town was kind to Sir *Antony Love*, I needed 'em only to be just to this: And to prove there was more than Friendship in his Opinion, upon the Credit of this Play with him, falling sick last Summer, he bequeath'd to my Care the Writing of half the last Act of his Trajedy of *Cleomenes*, which, when it comes into the World, you will find to be so considerable a Trust, that all the Town will pardon me for defending this Play, that preferr'd me to it. If Modesty be sometimes a Weakness, what I say can hardly be a Crime: In a fair *English* Trial both Parties are allow'd to be heard: And without this vanity of mentioning Mr. *Dryden*, I had lost the best Evidence of my Cause. Sir, I have the Privilege of a Dedication to say some fine Things of my Patron; but I will be as little Impertinent as I can, and only beg leave to say some true ones, and no more than I have always declar'd in the Absence of Mr. *Wharton*, that (without the Advantage of your

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Family and Fortune) you are the very Man I would chuse to be, if I could: I would have the Force of your Understanding, and Knowledge of Mankind, to make a Fortune out of the publick Business of the World: Or, if I were to mend my Condition more to my own Humour, and a way I should like better than thro' the hurry of a Crowd, your Wit and Conversation, your Person and Address, would best recommend me to the Women. I don't know, Sir, how successful you have been with that fair Sex, but I would not have it lie at any fair Lady's Door, (who has a Mind to be justify'd in disposing of her self) that she could not distinguish in your Favour, against all the Pretenders of the Town; If you have any Enemies among the Women, I must think 'tis, in a great measure, because it was impossible to engage 'em all to be your Friends. Sir, I am a Well-wisher to all your Interests, and be pleas'd to accept of this Dedication of my Respects, as an Offering of my Inclination, as well as a Duty from my Gratitude.

I am, SIR,

Your very much Oblig'd

Humble Servant,

T. Southern.

TO
Mr. SOUTHERN;
ON HIS
COMEDY,
CALL'D THE
WIVES EXCUSE.

SURE there's a Fate in Plays; and 'tis in vain
To write, while these malignant Planets reign:
Some very foolish Influence rules the Pit,
Not always kind to Sense, or just to Wit.
And whilst it lasts, let Buffoonry succeed,
To make us laugh; for never was more need.
Farce, in it self, is of a nasty Scent;
But the Gain smells not of the Excrement.
The Spanish Nymph, a Wit and Beauty too,
With all her Charms, bore but a single Show:
But, let a Monster Muscovite appear,
He draws a crowded Audience round the Year.
May be thou hast not pleas'd the Box and Pit;
Yet those who blame thy Tale, commend thy Wit;
So Terence Plotted; but so Terence Writ.

Like

To Mr. SOUTHERN.

Like his thy Thoughts are true, thy Language clean,
Ev'n Lewdness is made Moral, in thy Scene.
The Hearers may for want of Nokes repine,
But rest secure, the Readers will be thine.
Nor was thy Labour'd Drama damn'd or h'ld;
But with a kind Civility dismiss'd:
With such good Manners as the * Wife did use,
Who, not accepting, did but just refuse.
There was a Glance at parting; such a Look
As bids thee not give o'er for one Rebuke.
But if thou would'st be seen, as well as read;
Copy one living Author, and one dead:
The Standard of thy Style, let Etherege be:
For Wit, th' Immortal Spring of Wycherly.
Learn after both, to draw some just Design,
And the next Age will learn to Copy thine.

JOHN DRYDEN.

* The Wife in the Play, Mrs. Friendall.



PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mr. *Betterton*.

G Allants, you're welcome to our homely cheer:
If you have brought your English Stomachs here,
We'll treat you, as the French say, chere entire.
And what we want of Humour, or of wit,
Make up with your She-Neighbours in the Pit;
For on the Stage, what e'er we do or say,
The Vizard Masks can shew you better play:
With all our Pains, we can but bring 'em in;
'Tis you must take the Damsels out again:
And when we've brought you kindly thus together,
'Tis your fault if you're parted by foul weather.
We hope these natural reasons may produce,
In every Whoremaster, a kind Excuse.
For all our Faults, the Poet's, and the Player's,
You'll pardon our's, if you can find out their's. [To the Maskers
But to the gentler men who love at sight,
And never care to come to closer fight,
We have provided work for them to night.
With safety they may draw their Cannon down,
And into a Surrender bomb the Town.
From both side-boxes play their batteries;
And not a Bullet shot, but burning eyes.
Those they discharge with such successful arts,
They fire three deep into the Ladies Hearts.
Since each Man here finds his diversion,
Let not the damning of our Play be one.
But to the Ladies who must sit it out,
To hear us prate, and see the Oglers shoot,
Begging their Favour, we have this to say,
In hopes of their protection for the Play,
Here is a Musick-meeting every Day.

Dra-

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Lovemore.
Wellvile.
Wilding.
Courtall.
Springame.
Friendall.
Ruffle.
Mufick-Master.

Mr. Betterton.
Mr. Kynaston.
Mr. Williams.
Mr. Bowman.
Mr. Mich. Lee.
Mr. Montford.
Mr. Bright.
Mr. Harris.

W O M E N.

Mrs. Friendall.
Mrs. Sightly.
Mrs. Witwoud.
Mrs. Teazall.
Fanny, her Niece.

Mrs. Barry.
Mrs. Bracegirdle.
Mrs. Montford.
Mrs. Cory.

Betty, Witwoud's Maid. *Mrs. Richardson.*

Two Pages, Footmen, and Linkboys.

SCENE LONDON.

THE

THE
WIVES EXCUSE:
OR,

Cuckolds make Themselves.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE *the outward Room to the Musick-Meeting.*

Several Footmen at Hazard, some rising from Play.

1 FOOTMAN.

A Pox on these Musick-Meetings; there's no fifth Act here a free Cost, as we have at the Play-Houses, to make Gentlemen of us, and keep us out of harm's way: Nothing but Lice and Link-Boys in this Anti-chamber; or a merry Main to divert us; and that merry Main as you call it, makes most of us sad all the Week after.

2 Foot. Why, what hast thou done, Gill?

1 Foot. Undone my self, and a very good Friend of mine, my Belly for a Week forward: I am hungry already in the Apprehension of wanting a Supper; for my Board-wages is gone to the Devil with his Bones.

3 Foot. Six is the Main, Gentlemen.

4 Foot. That was my last Tester.

5 Foot. I'll play no more——

} *Both rising from Play.*

3 Foot.

2 *The WIVES EXCUSE: Or,*

3 *Foot.* Set out my Hand, don't leave me so, Gentlemen.

6 *Foot.* Come, Sir, Seven to Six, I set you——

3 *Foot.* Briskly, my Boy.

6 *Foot.* I set you this.

3 *Foot.* How much?

6 *Foot.* Three halperth of Farthings.

3 *Foot.* Three halperth of Farthings! [*Rises from Play.*
I see thou retain'st the Spirit of thy Ancestors, and as thou wert born and bred, wilt live and die a Footman.
—— Three half-penny worth of farthings!

2 *Foot.* He sets like a Small-beer Butler, in a Widow-Lady's Family.

3 *Foot.* May'st thou starve under the Tyranny of a House-keeper, and never know the comfort of Board-wages again.

6 *Foot.* Well, well, I have my Money for all that.

1 *Foot.* Why, what a pretty Fellow have we here debauch'd from us, and our Society, by living in a civil Family! But this comes of keeping good Hours and living orderly: Idleness after Supper in your private Houses is the Mother of many Mischiefs among the Maids.

3 *Foot.* Ay, ay, want of Employment has thrown him upon some gentle Chambermaid, and now he sets up for good Husbandry to father her failings, and get a wet Nurse for his Lady.

6 *Foot.* Better so, than to father your Master's Bastards as you do sometimes; or now and then cheat him of his Wench in the Convoy, and steal his Clap from him.

4 *Foot.* Gad I mercy i'faith, Lad.

3 *Foot.* That indeed is a Sin I often commit, and sometimes repent of: But, the Good with the Bad, I have no reason to complain of my Service.

6 *Foot.* Pray don't trouble your Head about mine then.

2 *Foot.* Come, come, we have all good Places if we can keep 'em: And for my Part, I am too deep in my Master's Affairs, to fear the losing of mine: What think you of the Family of the *Friendalls*, my Lads? a publick private Family, newly set up, and of very fair Reception.

3 *Foot.*

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3 *Foot.* Ay, *Dick.* Thou hast the time on't indeed.

2 *Foot.* The master of it frank and free, to make an Invitation to the whole Town; and the Mistress hospitable and handfom, to give 'em welcome and content: For my Master knows every body, and contrives that every body shall know her.

3 *Foot.* Ay, marry Sir, there's a Family to breed up a Pimp in! You may make a Fortune out of such a Mistress, before your Master can get her with Child.

2 *Foot.* My Master has been married not a quarter of a Year, and half the young Men in Town know his Wife already; nay, know that he has known enough of her, not to care for her already.

3 *Foot.* And that may be a very good Argument for some of 'em, to persuade her to know a little of some body else, and care as little for him.

4 *Foot.* A very good Argument, if she takes it by the right handle.

2 *Foot.* Some of your Masters, I warrant you, will put it into her Head.

3 *Foot.* I know my Master has a Design upon her.

2 *Foot.* And upon all the Women in Town.

4 *Foot.* Mine is in love with her.

5 *Foot.* And mine has hopes of her.

3 *Foot.* Every Man has hopes of a new marry'd Woman: For she marries to like her Man; and if upon Trial she finds she can't like her Husband, she'll find some body else that she can like, in a very little time, I warrant her, or change her Men till she does.

2 *Foot.* Let her like as many as she pleases, and welcome: As they thrive with her, I shall thrive by them: I grind by her mill, and some of 'em I hope will set it a going. Besides, she has discover'd some of my Master's Intrigues of late, that may help to fill the Sails; but I say nothing, I will take fees a both sides, and betray neither.

3 *Foot.* If your Lady loves play, as they say she does, she will be so far in your Interest, that he that makes his Court to her, must have Money to recommend him—

2 *Foot.* To me he must indeed, if he expects my Assistance.

5 *Foot.*

4 *The WIVES EXCUSE: Or,*

5 *Foot.* Come, come, what do you think of my Master, Mr. *Lovemore*, for the Lady?

3 *Foot.* I don't think of him.

2 *Foot.* Not so much as she does, I believe you; he's a generous Gentleman, and deserves very well of her and me.

1 *Foot.* My Master, Mr. *Wellvile*, is often at your House.

3 *Foot.* He follows Mrs *Sightly*, I can tell you. But if your Lady, Mrs. *Friendall*, has a Mind to be very well us'd; not to settle to't; but only by the way of a fashionable Revenge, or so, to do her self justice upon her Husband; I look upon Mr. *Wilding*, my Master, one or other, to be the cleverest Cuckold-Maker in *Covent-Garden*.

2 *Foot.* Not to settle to't indeed, for your Master is not over-constant.

3 *Foot.* He does not stay in a Family, to be challeng'd into *Westminster-Hall*, by the Husband's Action of Battery, for an Assault upon his Wife; he is not so constant.

4 *Foot.* Or if your Lady be dispos'd to the more refin'd part of an Amour, without the Brutality, or design of Enjoyment, only for the Pleasure of being talk'd of, or so forth——

3 *Foot.* Your Master *Courtall* will fit her to a Hair: For he will be as fond of the Appearances of an Intrigue, as she can be; to see him in the Chase, you would think he had pleasure in the Sport; for he will be as sure always to follow her, as never to press her: He will take as much pains, to put her undeservedly into a Lampoon, upon his Account, as he would to avoid a handsom Occasion, in private, to qualifie her for the Scandal.

2 *Foot.* In short, Mr. *Courtall* will do every thing, but what he ought to do, with a Woman.

4 *Foot.* He has broke off with three Gentlewomen, upon my Word, within these two Months, for coming on too fast upon that Business.

2 *Foot.* Well, there are Pretenders enow; so I have the Profit, let my Lady take the Pleasure of the Choice: I'm for the fairest bidder.

3 *Foot.*

Cuckolds make Themselves.

3 Foot. What, Harry, hast thou nothing to say of thy Mistress, Mrs. Witwoud?

7 Foot. Nothing extraordinary, but that I'm tir'd of her.

3 Foot. She lives, as she us'd to do, least at home; has no Business of her own, but a great deal of other Peoples. All the Men in Town follow her, but 'tis for other Women; for she has frightned every one from a Design upon her: Then she's a general Confident; and sometimes reports no more than she knows; but that's a Favour indeed from a Wit, as they say she is.

7 Foot. If she be a Wit, I'll be sworn she does not take me for one; for she sends me very often upon very ridiculous Errands.

3 Foot. I think you have a correspondent Porter in every quarter of the Town, to disperse her scandalous Letters, which she is always bantering one Fool or other withal.

7 Foot. Four or Five always in Pay with her.

3 Foot. But when Horn Fair comes, that's sure to be a Holy-Day, and every marry'd Man that has a Wife handsomer than she is, at her proper Cost and Charges, may expect a Fairing, to put him in mind of his Fortune.

7 Foot. I find you know her too well to desire to live with her.

3 Foot. I had rather be Master of the Ceremonies to a visiting Lady, to squire about her how d'ye's, and usher in the formal Salutations of all the Fops in Town, upon her Day; nay, tho' she kept two Days a Week, than live in a Family with her.

1 Foot. Will this damn'd Musick-Meeting never be done? would the Cats-guts were in the Fidlers Bel-lies.

Two Pages meeting.

1 Page. My Lady Smirkis's Page.

2 Page. Who's there? my Lady Wouldmore!

1 Page. At your dear Service, Madam.

2 Page. O Lord! Madam, I am surpriz'd to see your Ladyship here——

2 Foot. What have we here?

B

3 Foot.

The WIVES EXPOSED. Or,

3 Foot. The Monks apeing their Ladies, let 'em go on.

2 Page. How can your Ladyship descend into these little Diversions of the Town, the Plays and the Musick-meetings?

1 Page. Little Diversions indeed, Madam, to us, who have been so much better abroad, and still retain too much of the Delicacy of the French, to be pleas'd with the barbarous Performances of these English.

3 Foot. That's a touch for some of 'em.

1 Page. Yet there's no staying always at home, your Ladyship knows.

2 Page. Nor being always seen in the Drawing-room; I vow and swear.

1 Page. So that, Madam, we are almost under a Necessity of appearing in these publick Places.

2 Page. An absolute Necessity of shewing our selves sometimes.

1 Page. Ay, but, Madam, then the Men, they do so ogle one.

3 Foot. Ah! very well, Mr. Charles.

1 Page. Into all the little Confusions, that a Woman is liable to upon those Occasions.

2 Page. I swear my Lord *Simperwel* has an irresistible way with him.

1 Page. He ogled me all the Musick long, I believe every body took notice of it, so furiously, I could not bear it my self; I vow and swear, he almost made me blush; and I would rather do any thing to deserve blushing in another place, than by a Country Modesty betray such an unpardonable want of Breeding, to the censure of so much good Company.

3 Foot. I dare swear for her Ladyship, she had rather do it than blush for't.

1 Page. Why how now, Jack Sauce? [To the Footman. But did I blush, Madam?]

2 Page. Only for your Friends, Madam, to see us so neglected. [To the Page.]

1 Page. Fie, fie, Madam, you made your Conquest too, I minded no body but my Lord; and I vow and swear, I must own it, Madam, he ogles one more like a man

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a man of Quality, than any body about Town that I know of, and I think I am pretty well acquainted with all the soft looks in Town.

2 Page. One after another we have 'em all—but Jesu, Madam—

1 Page. Ay, Madam.

2 Page. They say the French Fleet will be here next Summer, with their *Tourvilles* and their Things, and Jesu, Madam, ravish us all.

1 Page. O Lord, Madam, Ravishing us is nothing, but our dear Religion, Madam, what will they do to that?

2 Page. Ay, what indeed, Madam?

1 Page. I would not lose the gaping Galleries of our Churches, for the best Religion in Christendom.

3 Foot. You are pretious Pages indeed, betray your Ladies Secrets, before you come into 'em.

Within. Make way for my Lord there, bear back Gentlemen.

1 Foot. So, so, 'tis done at last, let's get the Coaches to the Door. [Exeunt Omnes.]

The Curtain drawn up shows the Company as the Musick Meeting; after an Italian Song, Lovemore, Wellvile, Wilding, Courtall, Springame, Friendall, Ruffle, Mrs. Friendall, Sighly, Witwoud, Fanny advance to the Front of the Stage.

Mr. Fri. Ladies and Gentlemen, how did you like the Musick?

Sighly. O very fine sure, Sir.

Wit. What say you to't, young Gentlemen?

Spring. I have something to say to you, I like a great deal better, provided you won't laugh at me.

[Going aside with her.]

But the Musick's extreamly fine— [To the Company.]

Well. Especially the vocal Part. For I did not understand a Word on't.

Mr. Fri. Nor I, faith, *Wellvile*, but the Words were Italian, they sung well, and that's enough for the Pleasure of the Ear.

Court. By which I find your Sense is sound.

Mr. Fri. And sound Sense is a very good thing, Court— all— [Goes to Wild.]

B 2

Well. That

8 *The WIVES EXCUSE: Or,*

Well. That thou wot never be the better for.

Mr. Fri. Wilding, thou hast been so busie about that young Girl there, thou know'st nothing of the Matter.

Wild. O, Sir, you're mistaken, I am a great Admirer.

Mr. Fri. Of every thing in Petticoats.

Wild. Of these Musical Entertainments; I am very Musical, and love any Call, that brings the Women together.

Mr. Fri. Vocal, or Instrumental! which do you most approve of? If you are for the Instrumental, there were the Sonata's to Night, and the Chacons, which you know

Wild. The Sonata's and the Chacons, which I know! Not I, Sir, I don't know 'em: They may be two Italian Fidlers of your Acquaintance, for any thing I know of 'em.

Mr. Fri. Fie, fie, Fidlers! Masters, if you please, *Wilding*, Masters, excellent in their Art, and famous for many admirable Compositions. *[Mingles with the Company.]*

Court. So, he's fast in his own Snare, with his Sonata's, and Chacons: But how goes the World, *Wilding*?

Wild. The same Women every Day, and in every publick Appearance.

Court. Here are some Faces, I see, of your Acquaintance.

Wild. Ay, Pox take 'em, I see 'em too often to forget 'em: Would their Owners thought as ill of 'em as I do, they would keep 'em at home: But they are for shewing their shew still, tho' no body cares for the Sight. *[They mix with the Company.]*

Wit. Methinks 'tis but good Manners in *Mr. Lovemore*, to be particular to your Sister, when her Husband is so universal to the Company.

Spring. Prythee leave her to her Husband: she has satisfied her Relations enough in marrying this Coxcomb; now let her satisfy her self, if she pleases, with any body she likes better.

Wit. Fie, fie, there's no talking to you, you carry my Meaning further than I design'd.

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Spring. Faith I took it up but where you left it, very near the Matter.

Wit. No, no, you grow scandalous ; and I would not be thought to say a scandalous thing of a Friend.

Spring. Since my Brother-in-law is to be a Cuckold, as it must be mightily my Sister's Fault if he be not, I think *Lovemore* as proper a Fellow to carry on so charitable a Work, as she could ha' lit upon : And if he has her Consent to the Business, she has mine I assure you.

Wit. A very reasonable Brother !

Spring. Would you would be as reasonable a Friend, and allow me as many Liberties as I do her.

Wit. Why, so I will : She has the Men, and you shall have the Women, the whole Sex to pick and chuse——

Spring. One Mistress out of——

Wit. As many as you please, and as often as you have Occasion.

Spring. Why, Faith, that pleases me very well ; you hit my Constitution, as if you were familiar with it, or had a Mind to be so.

Wit. Not I indeed, Sir.

Spring. And I have, as you were saying——

Wit. As I was saying !

Spring. Very often an Occasion for a Mistress.

Wit. You say so your self, I know nothing of your Occasions.

Spring. Shall I bring you acquainted with some of 'em ? I have great Variety, and have, every Day, a new occasion for a new Mistress : If you have a Mind to be satisfied in this Point, let me go along with you——

Wit. Home with me ?

Spring. Or home with me, will do my Business as well.

Wit. But it won't do mine, Sir.

Spring. Then let it be home with you, tho' my Lodging is very convenient.

Wit. Why, this is sudden indeed, upon so small an Acquaintance : But 'tis something too soon for you, and a little too late for me.

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Spring. Not to repent, I hope, Madam? Better late than never, you know: Come, come, I have known a worse Offer better receiv'd.

Wit. And this Offer you will make to every Woman, till it be receiv'd, I dare answer for you.

Spring. That's more than you can do for your self for refusing it. But the Folly fall upon your own Head: I have done my part, and 'tis your fault if you're idle. [Goes away.]

Sight. You have been entertain'd, Cousin. [Sightly to her.]

Wit. By a very pretty prating Fellow, Cousin; and I could be contented to let him shew his Parts this way, as often as he pleas'd.

Sight. What! like a Man of Honour, he's for making good what he says.

Wit. And comes so quick upon that Business, he won't afford a Woman a reasonable liking-time, to make a decent Excuse to her self, if she shou'd allow him a Favour.

Sight. The young Officer has heard enough of your Character, I suppose, not to put it too much into your power of laughing at him.

Wit. I'm sorry for't: I would have a Man know just enough of me, to make him a Lover; and then, in a little time, I should know enough of him, to make him an Ass.

Sight. This will come home to you one day.

Wit. In any shape but a Husband, Cousin. But methinks Lovemore and Mrs. Friendall are very seriously engag'd.

[Observing Lovemore with Mrs. Friendall.]

Sight. I have had an Eye upon 'em.

Wit. For such a Trifle as Cuckolding a Husband is in this Town.

Sight. The Men will always design upon our Sex; but I dare answer for her.

Wit. And so will I. That if she should fall from the frailty of the Flesh, into that Folly, she will appear no Monster, what ever her Husband may be. What say you to a ramble after the Musick?

Sight. I say nothing to't.

Wit. A Hack.

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Wit. A Hackney jaunt, from one end of the Town to t'other?

Sight. 'Tis too late.

Wit. I know two several Companies gone into the City, one to *Pontacks*, and t'other to the *Rummer*, to Supper: I want to disturb strangely, what say you, *Coz*? Let's put on our *Masques*, draw up the *Glasses*, and send up for the Men, to make their Women uneasy: There's one of them to be marry'd, it may do good upon her, by shewing what she must trust to, if she will have a Husband.

Sight. And can you be so mischievous?

Wit. Can you resist the Temptation?

Sight. I came with Mrs. *Friendall*, and must go home with her. Look to your Charge there.

Wit. I have an Eye that way.

Sight. We shall see you to Morrow, Cousin?

Wit. At your *Toylet*, Cousin; you are always my first Visit.

[Goes to Wilding and Fanny.]

Mrs. Fri. Is this your Friendship to Mr. *Friendall*: I must not hear it.

Love. You see he gives you leave.

Mrs. Fri. Therefore I can't take it; the Confidence is so generous, that ev'n that would secure me to him.

Love. The Confidence is as generous on your side, and do you think that will secure him to you?

Mrs. Fri. I'll ask him, if you please.

Love. You'll but disturb him.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. *Friendall*.

[Calling him.]

Mr. Fri. Ha! what's the Matter, Madam?

Mrs. Fri. There has happen'd here a scurvy Dispute between me and one of your Friends, Sir, as you think fit to call'em.

Mr. Fri. A Dispute! about what, prythee? But before I hear a Word on't, *Lovemore*, thou art certainly in the wrong, in holding an Argument with a Woman.

Love. I begin to think so too, Sir, for contending with a Lady, that will be try'd by no Body, but her Husband.

Mr. Fri. But what's the Business? Nothing extraordinary between you, I hope?

Mrs. Fri. Believe me, Sir, I think it very extraordinary,

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Love. Very extraordinary indeed, Madam, to be so publickly expos'd for a private Opinion.

Mrs. Fri. And you shall be the judge of the difference.

Mr. Fri. No, no, no Difference among Friends, it must not come to that, I'll make up all Differences between you.

Love. You may do much indeed to set all strait.

Mr. Fri. And so I will, i'faith, *Lovemore*, I'll reconcile all I'll warrant you; but come, what is this mighty Matter between you?

Mrs. Fri. I think it a mighty Matter, *Mr. Friendall*, to be so far suspected in my Conduct, that any one, under the Title of your Friend, should dare, in your absence, to be so very familiar with me——

Mr. Fri. How, Madam!

Love. All will out, I see.

[*Aside.*

Mr. Fri. In my Absence, so very familiar with you!

Mrs. Fri. As to censure these innocent Liberties that the Women allow themselves in the Company of their Husbands.

Love. So, she has sav'd her Credit with me, and mine with her Husband.

[*Mrs. Friendall joins Mrs. Sightly and Witwoud.*

Mr. Fri. Why, *Lovemore*, thou art in the wrong of all this; I desir'd you to sport off a little Gallantry with my Wife, to entertain and divert her, from making her Observations upon me, and thou dost nothing but play the Critick upon her.

Love. I find I was mistaken. But how wou'd you have me behave my self?

Mr. Fri. Why, I wou'd have you very frequent in your Visits, and very obliging to my Wife: Now and then, to carry on our other Pleasures the better, for an Amusement, or so, you may say a civil Thing to her. For every Woman, you know, loves to have a civil Thing said to her sometimes; but then you must be very cautious in the Expression; if she should in the least apprehend that you had a Design upon her, 'twou'd raise the Devil in one part of the Family, and lay him in another, perhaps, where I had a mind to employ him: Therefore I would have you keep in Favour with her——

Love. I'll do my best, I promise you.

Mr. Fri.

Mr. Fri. She's inclining, you must know, to speak very well of you; and that she does of very few of the Men. I assure you: She approves of the Intimacy and Friendship between us, and of your coming to the House; and that may stand you in stead with the Lady, you wot of---

Love. I apprehend you——so begging the Lady's Pardon [*To Mrs. Friendall.*] with a design of doing something to deserve it.——

Wis. That will never fail with the Women, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I will make an Interest with the Masters, to give you a Song at parting. [*Goes to the Masters.*]

Sight. An *English* Song, good Mr. Lovemore.

Mr. Fri. O by all means, an *English* Song.

[*Goes to the Masters too.*]

Welw. Any Song, which won't oblige a Man to tell you, he has seen an *Opera* at *Venice* to understand.——

Mr. Fri. Pray, let him sing the Ladies the Song I gave him.

Musick-Master. Which Song, Sir?

Mr. Fri. The last.

Musick-Master. 'Tis not set, Sir.

Mr. Fri. Not set, Sir! [*Turning from him, to the Ladies.*]

Love. That's a Fault he'll never forgive you.

Musick-Master. Why, really, Sir, I would serve any Gentleman to my power; but the Words are so abominably out of the way of *Musick*, I don't know how to humour 'em: There's no setting 'em, or singing 'em, to please any Body but himself.

Sight. O! but we lose by this.

Mr. Fri. Hang 'em, idle Rascals; they care not what Entertainment we lose, so they have but our Money.

Sight. Is it your own Song, Mr. *Friendall*?

Mr. Fri. I must not rob your Ladyship of your Part in it.

Sight. My Part in your Song, Sir!

Mr. Fri. You were the Muse that inspir'd me; I writ it upon your Ladyship.

Sight. Fie, fie; that Pride wou'd ruin me: But I know you say so to every Woman. [*She turns from him.*]

Mr. Fri. I'gad, she's i'th' right on't; I have told a Dozen so already at the *Musick*-meeting, and most of 'em believe me.

Sight. Does Mr. Friendall often write Songs, Madam?

Mrs. Fri. He does many things, he shou'd not do, Madam; but I think he loves me, and that excuses him to me: Tho', you may be sure, 'tis with the tenderest Concern for my own Reputation, that I see my Husband daily trifle away his so notoriously, in one Folly or other of the Town. [Goes to Mr. Friendall.]

Wit. For her own Reputation, it must be; for the World will believe, she turns such a Husband to the right Use, whatever she says to the contrary.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. Friendall, pray be satisfy'd with a good Estate; and not imagine, because you have that, you have every thing else. The business of writing Songs should be over with a marry'd Man. And since I can't be suspected to be the *Phillis*, or *Cloris*, 'tis an Affront to me, to have any other Woman thought so.

Mr. Fri. Indeed, Madam, so far you are right: I never heard of any Man, that writ a Song upon his Wife.

SONG, by Major-General Sackville.

Ingrateful Love! Thus every Hour,

To punish me by her Disdain!

You tyrannike to shew your Power;

And She, to triumph in my Pain,

You, who can laugh at human Woes,

And Victims to her Pride decree.

On me, your yielding Slave, impose

Your Chains; but leave the Rebel free.

How fatal are your poison'd Darts!

Her conqu'ring Eyes the Trophies haust;

Whilst you gaze on poor wandering Fancies,

That in her Charms and Scorn are lost.

Impious, and Cruel: You deny

A Death, to ease me of my Care;

Which she delays, to make me try

The force of Beauty, and Despair.

Mr. Fri. Lovemore, we may thank you for this: But when you keep your Promise to me, at Dinner, to Morrow,

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row, and you, and you, and all of you, Gentlemen, *[Speaks to all the Men.]* I'll do you Reason to the good Company. Some of my Servants there—— *[Goes to the Door.]*

Court. Madam, I am very luckily here to offer you my Service.

Mrs. Fri. No particular Woman must expect it from so general a Follower of the Sex, as Mr. Courtall is.

Court. A general Follower of the Sex indeed, Madam, in my Care of 'em.

Mrs. Fri. Besides, 'tis dangerous to be seen with a Man of your Character; for if you don't make it an Intrigue, the Town makes it for you: And that does most of your Business as well.

Court. There's no knowing a Man by his Character in this Town; the partiality of Friends and the prejudice of Enemies, who divide it, always make him better or worse than he deserves.

Mrs. Fri. If you have no regard to my Reputation, pray be tender of your own. 'Tis now a days as scandalous in a Man, who would be thought to know the Town (as I know you would) to wait upon a bare Face to her Coach, as it us'd to be to lead out a Vizard Mask: But the Pit has got the better of the Boxes, with most of you, in that point of Civility; and I don't doubt, but it turns to better Account.

Spring. Indeed, Sister, it does turn to better Account; and therefore we must provide for our selves——

[Takes Courtall with him to Mrs. Witwoud.]
Why, here's a Woman, Courtall——If she has a Vizard-Mask to encourage me—— *[Love goes to Mrs. Fri.]*
I could go to the World's end with her: But, as she is, bare-fac'd, and an honest Woman——

Wit. You'll do a foolish thing, for once; see her to her Coach, I dare say for you, to make her otherwise.

Spring. Why, if it must be so—— *[Addressing to her.]*

Wild. You own your Aunt is a-bed; and you see Mrs. Witwoud's too busy to mind your going away with me.

Fan. I can't to Night, but I'll call upon you to Morrow Morning, as I go to Six a Clock Prayers.

Love. I hope, Madam, I may without Exception wait upon you,

[To Mrs. Friendall.]
Welv,

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Welv. And, Madam, I have the Title of an old Servant to your Ladyship, to expect that Favour from you—

[*To Mrs. Sightly.*

Sight. Mr. Friendall, having a handsome Wife in the Company, may be jealous; and you will pardon me, if I am unwilling to give him a suspicion of a Man, whom I would have every Body think as well of, as I do my self.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. Friendall gives you more Opportunities than I can approve of, and I could wish you wou'd not take the Advantage of 'em, they'll turn to no Account.

Mr. Fri. Come, Ladies, I am your Man I find——

[*Leads Mrs. Sightly, Mrs. Friendall following.*

Ruf. What think you of this Occasion?

Love. You can't have a better; follow him——And be famous—— [Springame leads Witwoud, Wilding leads Fanny out. Ruffle after the Company.

Well. What have you now in hand?

Love. Why all my Hopes of the Wife depending upon the senseless Behaviour of the Husband; I have contriv'd, by this Fellow, before her Face too, to expose him, a way that must ruin him with her for ever; let's follow, and expect the Event——

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE changes to the Street.

Several Link-Boys, and Footmen.

Link. Have a Light, Gentlemen, have a Light, Sir.

[*Springame with Witwoud.*

Spring. Light your selves to the Devil.

[*Wilding with Fanny, and several others.*

2. *Link.* Bless you, Master, we can find the Way in the dark. Shall I light your Worship there?

Spring. Then call a Coach, and thy Wit shall be thy reward.

5. *Foot.* Mr. Friendall's Coach there——'Tis at the Door, Sir.

Enter Mr. Friendall leading Mrs. Sightly with his Wife;

Ruffle enters after 'em. Lovemore and Welville in the Rear.

Mr. Fri. I must improve every Opportunity with your Ladyship, to convince you of the Truths I have been telling you to Night, and in this Billet, I give it under my

my Hand how very much I am your Servant—

[Sightly throws it behind her.]

Sight. Fie, fie, before your Wife— *[Ruffle takes it up.]*

Mrs. Fri. Sir, that Paper does not belong to you.

[Friendall leads Mrs. Sightly off, and returns for his Wife.]

Ruf. Don't be jealous, Lady, I know no design the Gentlewoman has as yet upon my Person, and I'll belong to you, if this Gentleman pleases.

Mr. Fri. You're pleas'd to be merry, Sir, but no touching her, I beseech you.

Mrs. Fri. What wou'd the Fellow have?

Ruf. Why, I wou'd have this Fellow gone about his Business.

Mr. Fri. My Business lies here at present, Sir.

Ruf. You lie there, Sir.

[Hits Mr. Friendall a Box on the Ear, and draws; the Women shriek, Mrs. Friendall pretends to hold her Husband; the Company come about 'em.]

Mrs. Fri. Good Mr. Friendall, another time, consider where you are. You are more a Man of Honour, I know, than to draw your Sword among the Women, I am sorry this has happen'd in a Place where you can't right your self, without wronging the Company. But you'll find a time to do a Justice to your self, and the Ladies, who have suffer'd in the apprehension of such a Brutality.

Spring. I'll go along with you— *[All go off but Witwoud.]*

Wit. Wou'd the Devil had 'em, for drawing their Swords here; I have lost my little Captain in the Fray: My Charge is departed too, and for this Night I suppose has left me to make an Excuse to the Family, for her lying abroad with a Country Cousin, or so; that Rogue *Wilding* has carry'd her Home with him, and 'tis as well now, as a Week hence, for when these young Wenches once set their Hearts upon't, every thing gives them an Opportunity to ruin themselves: Her Aunt *Traxall* has made her rise to Six-a-Clock Prayers to fine purpose, if this be the Fruits of her Devotion: But since she must fall to some Body, I'm glad *Wilding* has her, for he'll use her ill enough in a little time, to make her wiser for the future; by the dear Experience and Vexation of this Intrigue

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trigue, (being disappointed of many things she expects) she may make a Virtue of necessity, repent because she can't keep him to her self, and make an honest Man a very good Wife yet. [Exit.]

*Love*more, *Well*vile, *Ruffle* return.

Ruf. I have done my Part, and am satisfy'd with the Honour of the Atchievement.

Love. 'Tis a Reputation clear-gain'd: Since there's no danger of accounting for't.

Ruf. So thanking you for this occasion of shewing my self, I am your humble Servant—— [Exit.]

Wellv. Who is this Hero, pray?

Love. Why this is a Spark, that has had the Misfortune of being kick'd very lately, and I have help'd him to this occasion of repairing his Honour, upon our very good Friend, a greater Coward than himself: He has serv'd my Ends, now let him serve the Town's.

Wellv. But did you observe how the Lady behav'd her self in the Quarrel, to conceal her Husband's Cowardice?

Love. What a handsom Excuse she made in his Favour, to the Company? when she can never make any for him to her self.

Wellv. This matter well manag'd may turn to account; tho' you must not be seen to expose him, you may take the Advantage of his exposing himself.

Love. And let her say what she can upon this Subject; I believe no Woman can be contented to have her Honour much longer than her Fortune in the Possession of a Man, who has no Fund of his own, to answer in Security for either.

Thus, who a Married Woman's Love would win,
Should with the Husband's Failings first begin;
Make him but in the Fault, and you shall find
A good Excuse will make most Women kind. [Exeunt.]

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Cuckolds make Themselves.

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ACT II. SCENE I.

Witwoud at a Table, with Betty, and a Footman waiting.

Wit. NO News of my Cousin Fanny this Morning?

Betty. For God's sake, Madam, not a Word of her lying out to Night, we shall have the Devil to do with the old Gentlewoman, if she knows it.

Wit. That's a Secret I can keep from her, for my own sake, *Betty*: But how comes this about? I'm quite out of gilt Paper; *Harry*, you fetch me two or three Quire from Mr. Bentley's, and call at Mrs. Da Robe's, my Mah-toa Woman's, as you come back, for Letters——and if you hear? Give this Note to Joe the Porter, he needs no Instruction; let him leave it for Mr. Wilding——

[*Footman and Maid go out.*] I find I must meddle in this Business; for her Visits at this rate will not only be troublesom to him (as I would have 'em) but in a little time be publiek to the whole Town: Now, tho' I am very well pleas'd with any matter of Scandal; I am so nearly related to the Interest of this Girl, I would not have her the occasion of it. They say the Understanding ought to be suited to the Condition, to make any one happy: Would she were in a Condition suitable to her Understanding; she has Wit enough for a Wife, and nothing else that I know of.

Teazall enters to her.

Teaz. O, Madam! you're wellcome home.

Wit. Rather good-morrow, Cousin.

Teaz. Rather good-morrow indeed, that's the properer Salutation: For you're never to be seen in your Lodging at any other time of the Day; and then too, as soon as you are out a Bed in a Morning, you summon a Congregation of your Fellows together, to hear you prate by the hour, flatter every Body in the Company, speak ill of every one that's absent, and scatter about the Scandal of that Day.

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Wit. Why, Madam, you won't quarrel at that, I hope, 'tis one of the most fashionable innocent Diversions of the Town, it makes a great deal of Mirth, speaking ill of People, and never does any Body any harm.

Teaz. Not with any that know you, I believe. How came you home last Night? The Night before, you arriv'd like a carted Bawd, justly punish'd for the Sins of the People. You confess'd you were forc'd to bilk your Coach, to get rid of the Coxcombs that dog'd you from the Play-House, and being pursu'd by the Coachman and Footmen, (for I don't doubt but you gave the Gentlemen encouragement enough to come home with you) you look'd as if you belong'd to a Cellar, in some of the Allies you were hunted through, and had been caterwawling in all the Kennels in Town.

Wit. That was an unfortunate Night indeed.

Teaz. Well, deliver every good Woman's Child, I say, from such daggel-tail'd Courses as these are; what will be the end of them, I beseech you? You will make your self as odious in a little time, as you endeavour to make every Body else: This is not the way to get a Husband: the Men know too much of you already, to desire any more of you.

Wit. I don't fet up for a Husband.

Teaz. Marry come up here! you may have an occasion for an Husband, when you can't get one. Husbands are not always to be had at a Month's warning, to finish another Man's Work: What, 'tis beneath the Character of a she Wit, I suppose, to be constant: Or is a Husband out of Fashion with you forsooth? Another Woman's Husband can go down with you to my knowledge, and as ugly a Rogue too, with as hanging a Countenance, as I cou'd wish any Villain I had a mind to be rid of—— your Diversion as you call him.

Wit. O spare my Shame, I own he is my Curse, doom'd for my Plague and Pleasure.

Teaz. Spare your Shame! I'll say that for you, you have not been sparing of any Endeavour that cou'd bring a Shame any way into the Family wherever you liv'd yet; if there was ever a Fool soft enough to throw it upon. All your Relations know you, and are afraid to have

have you in a House with 'em: And I suppose you are very well pleas'd to be from under their Roof; to have your Fellows come after you to my House as they do; and as I am Fool enough to allow of.

Wit. For no harm, Cousin, I hope.

Teaz. Perhaps you think it no harm; and, indeed, it can't easily do you any harm: But, I'm sure, I have one of my Nieces already undone, by your bringing her acquainted with some of 'em. I was forc'd to marry her, you know, below her Rank (for the usual Reason of this End of the Town) into the City, where 'twas less scandalous, the Wives there having a Charter for what they do. And now *Fanny*, a very Girl, when I have provided a Husband, and all, for her, (for she must have a Husband,) she takes after her Sister; (as a little thing will make a President for what we are inclin'd to;) she takes after her Sister, I say, and is unfortunately engag'd in a Passion for Mr. *Wilding*: And how to prevent it—

Wit. Indeed I must acknowledge I was, in a great Measure, the unfortunate Cause of my Cousin *Biddy's* Mis-carriage; but for my Cousin *Fanny*, rely upon me; nothing shall come on't: I am now going to Mr. *Wilding* on that Account; and have sent a Note to secure him at his Lodgings 'till I come.

Enter Betty.

Teaz. Well, where's this Girl? Why does not she come, when I send for her?

Betty. Madam, she went to Six-a-Clock Prayers, and is not come back yet.

Teaz. God's Bodikins? has she got the Trick on't? Of abusing the Church into the place of Assignment already? *Wilding* has carry'd her home with him, that's certain: Get you gone after her; may be you may prevent his wicked Design on her. Go, go, and redeem her, tho' you leave your self in her room.

Wit. I'am oblig'd to you, truly, Madam.

Teaz. I dare venture you, you'll not be in Love with him; you'll give him as good as he brings; and, let the worst come to the worst, you have liv'd too long in the Town, to be uneasy for any Man; or be concern'd beyond the Pleasure and Convenience of the Intrigue. Therefore I

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may venture you, a little time goes a great way in this Business; deliver her, and I won't find fault with you, these three Days you shall do what you please. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE *Mr. Friendall's House.*

Mrs. Friendall following Mr. Friendall.

Mrs. Fri. Nay, Mr. Friendall, I know what you will object to me; but you must hear me out. The concern and care of your Reputation is as dear to me, as it can be tender to you; since I must appear to the World only in that Rank of Honour which you are pleas'd to maintain.

Mr. Fri. Why Madam, you have as handsome an Equipage as any Man's Wife in Town, that has a Father alive.

Mrs. Fri. This must not put me off. I see you make little of the Matter, to hide it from my Fears; and there indeed you're kind: But 'tis in vain to think of concealing from me what you intend; from what you ought to do, I know what you will do, after so base a Wrong.

Mr. Fri. A drunken Extravagance, the Fellow will be sorry for't, when he's sober.

Mrs. Fri. If you wou'd stay till then.

Mr. Fri. And beg my Pardon.

Mrs. Fri. That he shall do, if that wou'd satisfie you.

Mr. Fri. Satisfie me!

Mrs. Fri. And let it satisfie you, it ought to satisfie you from such a one. For, I believe he wou'd not have quarrel'd any where else, nor there neither, but upon the prospect of being prevented, or parted, or secur'd over Night, in order to beg Pardon in the Morning.

Mr. Fri. Ay, Madam, but consider.

Mrs. Fri. Pray consider me, Mr. Friendall, I must suffer every way, if you proceed to a Revenge; in your danger, which must be mine; in my Honour, which ought to be more your's, than to expose it upon every little Occasion. Come, come, in other things you have a good Opinion of my Conduct, pray let me govern here: You may be assur'd I'll do nothing to lessen you; the Satisfaction shall be as publick as the Affront. Leave it to me for once, I wonnot be deny'd. He is not worth your Danger.

Mr. Fri.

Mr. Fri. Well, you shall govern me.

Mrs. Fri. What, you are a marry'd Man, and have a good Estate settled upon you, and shou'd not be accountable to every idle Rake-hell, that has a mind to establish a Renown, from being troublesome to publick Places.

Mr. Fri. What then would you propose?

Mrs. Fri. A small Request; not to stir abroad, nor be at home to any Body, 'till you hear from me.

Mr. Fri. I promise you I won't. [Exit.]

Mrs. Fri. I dare take your Word: His tameness last Night, and backwardness this Morning, in resenting that Blow, satisfy me that he is not in a Fever for Fighting; I don't know that he is a Coward; but having these Reasons to suspect him, I thought this was my best way to hinder him from discovering himself! For if he had betray'd that Baseness to me, I shou'd despise him; and can I love the Man I must despise? Brother, I sent for you. [Spring comes to her.]

Spring. To make up this Quarrel I know, and I come to lend a helping Hand to the Work, I design to be a Second in the Business.

Mrs. Fri. You must be my Second then, for I have taken the Quarrel upon me.

Spring. With all my Heart, I'gad; We, who live all the Summer for the Publick, shou'd live in the Winter for our selves.

Mrs. Fri. And the Women, good Captain.

Spring. That's living for our selves, for 'tis not living without them: And a Duel now might but interrupt a Month of other Business perhaps, that would be more agreeable to my Constitution, I assure you: Then we are to have no fighting it seems?

Mrs. Fri. For Reasons I'll tell you hereafter.

Spring. Nay there was no great danger of it; I have found out the Gentleman's Lodgings and Character: We shall strike up a Peace before a Bottle to an end.

Mrs. Fri. This Challenge must be deliver'd as from him: I trust the Management to you: Only take this in Advice, that Mr. Friendall wants your Assistance within; you must stand by him, and oblige the Gentleman to make him Satisfaction, without bringing his Person in danger.

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Spring. I understand you, and he shall satisfy him or me.

Mrs. Fri. See him satisfy'd, and I'll satisfy you, with something shall be better to a younger Brother, than the false Musters of a Winter's Quarter.

Spring. I warrant you.

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. Fri. Whatever I think of him, I must not let him fall into the Contempt of the Town: Every little Fellow, I know, will be censoriously inquisitive, and maliciously witty, upon another Man's Cowardise, out of the pleasure of finding as great a Rascal as himself. How despicable a Condition must that Matrimony be, when the Husband (whom we look upon as a Sanctuary for a Woman's Honour) must be obliged to the Discretion and Management of a Wife, for the Security of his own! Have a care of thinking that way, for in a marry'd State, as in the Publick we tie our selves up, indeed; but to be protected in our Persons, Fortunes and Honours, by those very Laws that restrain us in other things; for few will obey, but for the Benefit they receive from the Government—

Enter Servants.

Servant. Madam, Mr. Lovemore— [Goes out.]

Mrs. Fri. Lovemore here! I know he comes to tempt me to rebel; but I'm prepar'd for him— Good morrow, Mr. Lovemore.

Enter Lovemore.

Love. I cou'd not expect to see your Ladyship so early: I come to Mr. Friendall.

Mrs. Fri. May I thank you for the Visit?

Love. I come as a Friend, you may be sure, Madam: Where your Honour's concern'd, I can't be an Enemy.

Mrs. Fri. Not reasonably indeed, to any Man that wou'd injure it, since you are a profess'd Enemy.

Love. An Enemy!

Mrs. Fri. Unless you will allow no Body to ruin it, but your self.

Love. Indeed I would allow no Body to defend it, but my self, if I had the keeping of it: But a happier Man has that Title, and I can only hope to be a Second in your Service,

Mrs. Fri. I thank you for the Service you design me: but that happier Man, as you call him, who has the Title,

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de, will maintain it, it seems ; for he, and my Brother *Springame*, I'm afraid, are gone about it already.

Love. Gone, Madam !

Mrs. Fri. An hour ago, before I had notice to prevent 'em : for Mr. *Friendall*, you may be sure, was impatient for an Occasion of righting himself.

Love. I might have thought so, indeed, Madam : would I had come sooner.

Mrs. Fri. You may yet be serviceable to me, Sir, tho' you are too late for Mr. *Friendall*.

Love. How, Madam, I beseech you ?

Mrs. Fri. By endeavouring to prevent 'em : You are acquainted with the Ways of reconciling Matters of this honourable Nature. I am going to make an Interest with a Kinsman, a Colonel of the Guards, my self, to secure 'em. Let your good Nature in this be a Proof of your Friendship : and command me to my Power—

[*Exit*.

Love. Prevent 'em ! Yes, yes : That I must do for my own sake : For if he should behave himself better than I imagin'd he would, it may secure him in his Wife's Esteem, and only ruin me with her, who laid the Design.

— [*Exit*.

SCENE *Wilding's Lodging.*

Enter Wilding, and his Man.

Wild. Have you dispos'd of her ?

Serv. Safe into a Chair, Sir : she's jogging homeward lighter by a Maiden-head, I presume, than she came, Sir.

Wild. The Loss is not so light, but she may feel it.

Serv. Heavy enough, perhaps, nine Months hence,

Sir. But have you sent ever a Lie along with her ?

Wild. How, Sirrah ?

Serv. Pardon me, Sir : Not that I believe your Honour was sparing of your Conscience, in saying any thing, and swearing to't, that she had a Mind to believe.

Wild. That you may swear, indeed.

Serv. But she's gone away so very well satisfy'd with what you have said and done to her, she's above inventing

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ing a Lie for her self: The first angry Word they give her at home, I suppose, you may hear of her; a Hackney-Coach removes her and her Commodities, upon very little warning; and I expect when she will send in half a dozen Band-boxes, to take Possession of your Lodgings. But, pray Sir, if I may be so bold—

Wild. Yes, yes; at this time you may be so bold: The Service of your Wit secures you the Privilege of your Jest.

Serv. Then, pray Sir, why did you take so much Pains to persuade this young Creature to come away from her Aunt, when I know you never design to take care of her your self?

Wild. Why, Faith, I can't make you a very good Answer: But the best Reason I know of, is (besides the Reputation of undoing her) it looks kind, at the time, to talk of providing for the Woman that does one the Favour. 'Twas a very plausible Argument, to cozen her into a Consent; level to my Design of lying with her, and carry'd to the very Mark of Love.

Serv. Indeed it costs nothing to promise, when nothing can oblige you to pay: And if she depends upon it, at her Peril; 'tis she will be disappointed, not you; tho' ten to one, poor little Rogue, from the Fondness of her own Inclinations, she guesses at yours: And fancies, from the Courtesie she has done you, you will be so civil a Gentleman to marry her.

Wild. Not unlikely; There's none of these young Girls, (let a Man's Character be never so loose among 'em,) but, from one Vanity or other, will be encouraged to design and venture upon him: And tho' fifty of their Acquaintance have fall'n in the Experiment, each of them will still imagine, she has something particular in her Person, forsooth, to reclaim and engage him to her self. So most of 'em miscarry upon the Project of getting Husbands.

Serv. Gad forgive me for Swearing; but, as I hope to be fav'd, and that's a bold Word for a Footman, I beg your Pardon; there's a Lady below, in a Vizard, to speak with you. [Exit.

Wild. Get you gone, you Rascal; beg her Pardon, and

and leave to wait upon her: She would have been admitted, in less time, to a Privy-Counsellor's Levee, though he had laid aside the Business of the Nation, to manage her's! This must be the Letter-Lady: She comes a little unseasonable, if she knew all: If she has Experience enough to allow for some natural Miscarriages, which may happen in the beginning of an Amour, I may pacify her that way: 'Tis but swearing heartily, damning the Modesty of my Constitution, laying its Faults upon an Over-respect to her, and promising better Things for the Future: That us'd to be a current Excuse; but 'tis the Women's Fault, if it pass too often upon 'em. If she prove an old Acquaintance, the Coldness of the Entertainment will secure me from the Persecution of her Visits hereafter: But if it be a Face I never saw, I may use her well enough yet, to encourage her to another Appointment. So every way does my Business, whatever becomes of the Lady's. [Witwoud enters mask'd.] O, Madam, I beg your Pardon.

Wit. No Excuses, good Sir; Men of Employment are above good Breeding; and I see you have a great deal upon your Hands.

Wild. I am a Man of Business, indeed, Madam; and, as you were pleas'd to signify in your Letter, my Practice lies among the Women: What can I do for you?

Wit. Can't you tell what, Sir? You are not the Man I took you for: But you are like our Fortune-tellers, who come into our Secrets more by our own Folly, in betraying our selves, than by any Skill or Knowledge of their own.

Wild. Indeed I should ha' proceeded, as most of those Fellows do, set out impudently at first, taken several things for granted (as that you were no Maid, and so forth) ventur'd briskly at every thing, and something might have happen'd to please you.

Wit. Did the Lady, just gone away from you, find it so?

Wild. She had what she came for: You would take it ill, to lose your Labour yourself, Madam.

Wit. She ventur'd at every thing, as briskly as you could, I suppose, Sir?

Wild. 'Tis

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Wild. 'Tis a towardly Girl indeed, and comes on finely; I have no reason to complain of losing my Labour upon her: She's ready for running away from her Relations already. Are not you a little that way inclin'd? Come, come, if you have any troubles upon your Spirits, Child——

Wit. You can remove 'em into the Flesh, I warrant you.

Wild. If you have ever a Husband, that lies heavy upon your Conscience, I have a Cordial will drive the Distemper from your Heart.

Wit. Why that's kind indeed, to make some room for the Lover: But that is not my Distemper: I could resolve it my self, if I had a Husband, whether I would make him a Cuckold, or no: But I lye under a Difficulty of disposing of a Maiden-head.

Wild. There I must resolve you, that case I often handle.

Wit. But hear it, I beseech you, before you decide it.

Wild. That would do well in *Westminster-Hall*, I grant you, but in Proceedings of this nature, we are always on the Plaintiff's side: Let the sober Party say what they can to the Reason of the thing; you are certainly in the Right, in pleasing your self.

Wit. 'Twill come to that, I believe: For you must know, Sir, that being under the Discretion and Tyranny of an old Aunt——

Wild. You will naturally run away from her.

Wit. And being considerable enough, to be followed for my Fortune——

Wild. You will certainly be betray'd and sold by her——

Wit. To some Booby of her own Breed, who paying too dear for the Purchase will undo himself to undo me.

Wild. Come, come, you are now under my Care, 'tis my Fault, if you miscarry——

Wit. And mine too, if I do.

Wild. Let me be your Trustee——

Wit. Indeed the Woman should cheat the Man, as much as she can, before Marriage; because, after it, he has a Title of cheating her, as long as he lives.

Wild. If

Wild. If you can't make over your Money, make over your——

Wit. Common Conveyances both in our Sex, Sir.

Wild. A Maiden-head's a Jewel of no value in Marriage——

Wit. 'Tis never set down indeed, in the Particular of a Woman's Estate.

Wild. And therefore least mis'd by a Husband, of any thing she brings along with her.

Wit. If indeed, by the Articles of Marriage, a Man should covenant for a Maiden-head, the Woman, in a legal Honesty, ought to satisfy the Bargain; but the Men never mention that, for fear of inflaming the Jointure.

Wild. And the Women never put 'em upon't.

Wit. Out of a Conscience in their Dealings to be sure, for fear they should not always be able to be as good as their Words.

Wild. I see, Madam, we differ only in our Sexes; and now, if you please, we will beget a right Understanding between them too.

Wit. How, Sir!

Wild. I'll shew you how: Have a Care what you do, Madam, 'tis a very difficult Matter, let me tell you, to refuse a Man handsomly; look you, Madam, I would have you make a decent Resistance, a little of it enhances the Favour, and keeps up the value of your Person; but too much on't is an undervaluing of mine. Nay, nay, when it once comes to fighting, you often ruin what you would raise. Strugling too long, is as much to your Disadvantage, as not struggling at all; and you know 'tis the same thing to a Woman, a Man's being indifferent, as his being incapable to oblige her— Come, Come, enough of this——

Wit. So I say too, Sir, the Jest will go no further, I see.

[Unmasks, he declines into a Respect to her.]

Wild. Mrs. Witwoud! I did not expect to see you here, indeed, Madam.

Wit. I came upon Business, Mr. *Wilding*, but the Temptation of a Vizard Mask, and the Pleasure of prating upon such an Occasion, has carried me a little beyond it.

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Wild. I am oblig'd to you for a great deal of Wit; whatever else you design me by this Visit.

Wit. Which now you hardly thank me for; since 'tis impossible for an old Acquaintance, to answer your Expectations of a new Face.

Wild. To shew how I value your Visit and the Regard I have for you, I will give some necessary Orders in the Family, to prevent your being seen in my Lodgings, and wait upon you again. [Exit.]

Wit. By this extraordinary Care of my Reputation, I find he has no Design upon it himself: Not that I have any Design upon Mr. *Wilding*; but I am sorry to find, that every Man has not a Design upon me; for since Want is the rate of things, I know no real value of Reputation, but in regard of common Women, who have none; no extraordinary Worth of a Maiden-head; but as 'tis a Temptation to the Man to take it away; and the best Commendation of Virtue is, that every Man has a Design to put it to the Trial. It vexes me tho' to think he should grow so tame, upon the Sight of me; not that I believe, I had any thing in my Face that alter'd him; something did, that's certain; by which I find 'tis not enough for a Woman to be handsome, there must be a probability of making that handsome Woman kind, to make a Man in love with her, for no Man is in love without some Encouragement to hope upon: Now from one of my Character, who have impertinently prated away so much of my time, (in setting up for a Wit, to the Ruin of other Peoples Pleasure, and Loss of my own) what Encouragement or Probability can there be, but that, as I have liv'd a Fool, I ought to die repenting, unpity'd, and a Maid? if I had dy'd a Maid, 'tis but what I deserv'd for laughing so many honest Gentlemen off their charitable Design of making me otherwise.

Wilding enters to her.

Wild. Now, Madam, you may command me.

Wit. It shall be to do your self a Favour then, Mr. *Wilding*, to rid you of an Incumbrance, which lyes as heavy upon your Pleasures, as a Wife upon her Husband.

Wild. O defend me from a Wife,

Wit. And

Wit. And from a silly Mistress, Sir, the greater Burthen of the two : A Wife you may lay aside, but a foolish fond Mistress will hang about you, like your Conscience, to put you in mind of your Sins, before you are willing to repent of 'em. You know whom I mean, Mr. *Wilding*, you may trust me with the Secret, because I know it already.

Wild. That's one very good Reason truly, Madam.

Wit. My Cousin *Fanny* indeed is very well in her Person

Wild. I'm glad on't.

Wit. Very well to be lik'd, I mean.

Wild. I mean so too, Madam : Tho' I have known a Clap mistaken for a Maiden-head, before now. [*Aside.*

Wit. But she's a Girl, and I can guess how very unfit a Girl must be, to give you any desire beyond undoing her : For I know your Temper so well, (now you have satisfy'd the Curiosity or Vanity of your Love) you would not bear the Punishment of her Company another Day, to have the Pleasure of it another Night, whatever you have said to persuade her to the contrary.

Wild. Fie, Madam, think better of me.

Wit. Better, nor worse, than I do of all the young Men in Town : For I believe you would now resign her to any body else, with as much satisfaction as you got her for your self : I know most of those matters end in the Benefit of the Publick : And a little of your ill Usage (which you will take care to supply her withal) may make her one of the common Goods of the Town : But that's a Ruin I would prevent, if I could : Therefore, to save you the Labour of getting rid of her (for that's the only design you have now upon her, I'm sure) I came to spare your Good-nature the Trouble, by making you a very fair offer.

Wild. Let's see how reasonable you can be, in another Body's Bargain.

Wit. Very reasonable you shall find me, if you will but give over your farther Attempts upon her, (which now you may easily be persuaded to, I suppose) and contribute, by your Assistance, to my Design of marrying her : I will engage my self and Interest (which you

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know is very considerable in my own Sex) to serve you in any other Woman of my Acquaintance.

Wild. Faith, Madam, you bid like a Chapman.

Wit. Any Woman of any Family or Condition, the best Friend I have I'll befriend you in, and thank you into the Bargain.

Wild. Stay, let me consider, which——

Wit. But take this Advice along with you; raise the Scene of your Affairs above the Conquest of a Girl. Some of you Sparks think, if you can but compass a Maiden-head, though but your Taylor's Daughter's, you have settled a Reputation for ever. Why, Sir, there are Maiden-heads among the Women of Quality, though not so many perhaps; but there are Favours of all kinds to be had among 'em; as easily brought about, and at the same price of Pains, that you can purchase a Chamber-maid's.

Wild. I'm glad you tell me so.

Wit. Why, there's Mrs. *New-love* and her Cousin *Tru-game*, Mrs. *Artist*, Mrs. *Dancer*, Lady *Smirker*, Lady *Wouamore*; and twenty more of your Acquaintance and mine, all very fine Women to the Eye——

Wild. And of Reputation to the World.

Wit. Why those very Women of Reputation to the World have every one of 'em, to my certain Knowledge, an Intrigue upon their Hands, at this very time; for I'm intimate with all of 'em.

Wild. I see you are.

Wit. But as fine as they seem to the Eye, Mr. *Wilding*, what with the false Complexions of their Skins, their Hair and Eye-brows with other defects about 'em, which I must not discover of my Friends, you know; with their Stinking-breath in the Morning, and other unsavory Smells all the Day after, they are most of them intolerable to any Man that has the Use of his Nose.

Wild. That I could not believe indeed, but that you tell me so.

Wit. Then there's Mrs. *Faceall*, a very fair Woman indeed, and a great Fortune: As much in shape as you see her, I have been a God-mother to two of her Children, and she passes for a very good Maid still.

Wild. She

Wild. She past upon me, I assure you ; for I was very near marrying her my self once.

Wit. Chuse where you please, but I would not advise you to any I have nam'd yet.

Wild. Is there any hopes of Mrs. Friendall ?

Wit. Little or none, yet a-while, I believe : Mr. Love-more has at present engaged her : But there's my Cousin Sighly ; Lord, that I should forget her so long ! That I should be so backward in serving a Friend ! She is the fittest Woman in the World for you ; the most convenient for your purpose in all the Town : easie in her Humour and Fortune, and able to make her Lover so every way : She shall be the Woman.

Wild. Would you would make her so.

Wit. I can and will make her so. We shall walk in the Mall this Morning, if you think fit to be there, it may introduce the Acquaintance.

Wild. I'll but dress, and be with you.

Wit. I don't doubt, but in a little time, to give you an Opportunity, and the Lady an Inclination of having it improved, but that must be your Business : I'm a going about mine, to make her a Visit. Remember our Bargain, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Wild. I warrant you :

Let Whore-masters rejoice ; the Times must mend,
If every Woman has but such a Friend.

[*Exit.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE Ruffle's Lodgings.

Enter Ruffle and Servant.

Ruf. **A** Gentleman to speak with me ! I am gone to Banstead-downs, to the Horse-match.

Serv. There's no Match there, Sir, this Fortnight.

Ruf. Not this fortnight ! I had forgot my self : but you may say, I went out by five in the Morning ; and you don't know when I shall come back. Go, tell him so.

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Serv. I have told him already, you were within, Sir.

Ruf. Pox on him, what manner of Man is he? Does he look like a Man of Business?

Serv. Not much like a Man of Business.

Ruf. No, I warrant you; some Coxcomby Companion or other, that visits in a Morning; and makes other People idle, not to be idle himself. But can't you tell what he would have with me?

Serv. I'll ask him, if you please.

Ruf. He may be a Messenger, for ought I know.

Serv. I'll bring an Account of him. [Exit.]

Ruf. Would he were a Messenger: I could be contented to pay the Fees, to be secur'd in the Hands of the Government for a Fortnight. Well, this Guilt is certainly very terrible. The Blow I gave *Friendall* was a very ill thing done of me; it lyes heavier upon my Conscience this Morning, than it did upon his Face last Night.

Servant re-enters.

Serv. His Name is Captain *Springam*: You know his Business, he says.

Ruf. Yes, yes, I guess at it: I thought what it would come to. Shew him up to me. [Exit Servant.]

I must do as well as I can. [Strips into his Gown and Cap.]
There comes no good of being too forward upon these Occasions:—'twill require some time to dress again:
'Tis gaining Time at least.

Enter Springam.

Spring. Good-morrow, Sir, I have a small Bill upon you here.

Ruf. A Challenge, I suppose.

Spring. Payable at Sight, as you will find it.

Ruf. You take me unprovided, you see, Sir, to answer you at sight.

Spring. I'll stay 'till you dress, Sir, if that be all, to have you along with me.

Ruf. Ay, ay, Sir, I'll go along with you; never doubt it, Sir; you shan't stay long for me; I may dress time enough for some Body, if that be your Business: I'll do the Gentleman Reason, I warrant him.

Spring. We ask no more, Sir.

Ruf. You are his Friend, I suppose?

Spring. At

Cuckolds make Themselves. 35

Spring. At your Friend's Service: I serve upon these Occasions sometimes; by way of Second, or so, when I want Employment of my own.

Ruf. Is fighting your Employment?

Spring. 'Tis a Soldier's Employment.

Ruf. Why really, Sir, I beg your Pardon, I'm sorry I must disappoint you; I never make use of a Second; especially in such a Quarrel as this is; where I am so much in the Wrong already, that I am almost unwilling to engage in it any farther my self: Where is your Friend, pray?

Spring. Below, in a Coach, Sir.

Ruf. O dear Sir, don't let him wait upon me, bring him up, I beseech you—and d'ye hear, Sir? I'm loth to justify an ill thing, if he is resolv'd to be satisfy'd, why with all my Heart, Sir, I'll give him the Satisfaction of a Gentleman, I'll beg his Pardon; pray tell him so.

[*Exit Springam.*]

If fighting be his Employment, wou'd he were at it, or any where else, and I fairly rid of him: I cou'd discover now that *Lovemore* set me on to affront him; that wou'd throw the Quarrel upon *Lovemore*: But then *Lovemore* knows me, and I must expect to be scurvily us'd by him if I do: Hang Baseness; 'tis but begging Pardon at last.

Springam enters with Mr. Friendall.

Spring. A very civil Gentleman, Brother, he is not the Man you took him for.

Ruf. No, indeed, Sir, the Captain's in the right; I never justify any ill Thing.

Mr. Fri. 'Tis very well you don't, Sir.

Ruf. I am more a Man of Honour, I assure you, Sir.

Mr. Fri. I shall be glad to find you so.

Ruf. Sir, you shall find me so; I scorn to do an ill Thing, as much as any Man: I was last Night in the wrong, as every Man is sometimes, and I'm sorry for't: What would you have more, Sir?

Mr. Fri. That is not enough, Sir, I must have more.

Ruf. Why, I beg your Pardon, Sir.

Mr. Fri. What's begging my Pardon, Sir, for such a publick Affront?

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Spring. So, now he grows upon him. [*Aside.*

Mr. Fri. That won't do my Business, begging my Pardon: My Reputation's at Stake, and that must be satisfy'd before you and I part, Sir.

Ruf. Lord, Sir, you are the strangest Man in the World; you won't oblige me to justify an ill Thing, wou'd you?

Mr. Fri. Damme, Sir, what do ye mean? Not to give me Satisfaction?

Ruf. I mean, Sir, to give you any Satisfaction in Reason; but I can't fight against my Conscience, if I were to be hang'd, Sir, not I.

Spring. No, Brother, that's a little too hard upon the Gentleman: You see his Conscience won't suffer him to fight with you.

Mr. Fri. Damn him and his Conscience; he made no Conscience of affronting me.

Spring. But his Conscience has flown in his Face since, it seems.

Mr. Fri. And now he finds it only in his Fears.

Spring. Come, come, you may be satisfy'd without fighting.

Mr. Fri. If you think so, Brother——

Lovemore enters and joins with Friendall.

Love. Pox on't, they're here before me.

Ruf. Captain, I'll beg your Friend's Pardon, in any publick Place, at the Musick Meeting, if he pleases——

Spring. That's staying too long for't.

Ruf. Or in full Mall, before the Beau's, or the Officers of the Guards; or at *Will's* Coffee-House before the Wits, or in the Play-House, in the Pit, before the Vizard-Masks, and Orange-Wenchies; or behind the Scenes, before the Women-Actors; or any where else, but upon the Stage; and you know, one wou'd not willingly be a Jest to the Upper-Galleries.

Mr. Fri. You hear what he says, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I'll do you Justice, Sir.

Ruf. If none of these Offers will serve his Turn,

[*Seeing Lovemore he takes Heart again.*

Sir, if your Friend will be satisfy'd with nothing but Extremities, let him look to himself, let what will be the Consequence: I must do as well as I can with him.

Love. So,

Love. So, he has seen me, I find.

[*Aside.*

Spring. What the Devil he won't fight at last sure. [*Aside.*

Ruf. Sir, your most humble Servant : You guess these Gentlemens Business I suppose : I have offer'd 'em any Satisfaction in reason : But taking me, as you see, Sir, at a Disadvantage, two to one, nothing wou'd content 'em without exposing my self, as a Rascal, to all the Town, Sir ; now, Sir, you are more a Gentleman I know, and they shall be damn'd before I give 'em any other Satisfaction, now I have a Man of Honour to stand by me.

Love. Gentlemen, I came to reconcile you, if I can : What say you ?

Spring. He offer'd just now to beg my Brother's Pardon in the Play-House.

Ruf. Make your best on't ; I did so.

Mr. Fri. Then let it be to Night in the Side-Box, before the Ladies—

Ruf. With all my Heart, Sir.

Mr. Fri. For they are the part of the Town that a Man of Pleasure should secure a Reputation withal. Your Servant, Sir. *Lovemore*, your humble Servant.

[*Friendall and Springam go out.*

Love. And hast thou begg'd his Pardon ?

Ruf. And glad to come off so : I was never so put to't, to bring my self off a Quarrel before ; it had been impossible, if the Captain had not done a good Office between us ; but I bore up as soon as I saw you.

Love. But then 'twas too late : You had sneakingly begg'd his Pardon before : If you had sent to me at first, I wou'd have brought you off cleverly. Suppose he had carry'd you behind *Southampton House*, which he never intended, 'twas but falling down, or dropping your Sword, when you came there, to have sav'd all : But now you have ruin'd your own Reputation and my Design upon him for ever.

Ruf. What cou'd I do ? He not only sent me a Challenge, but came himself to carry me along with him.

Love. How ? Send you a Challenge, and come with it himself ! that's something odd ; pray, let's see the Challenge.

Ruf. There 'tis ; make your best on't ; the Paper

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will make admirable Crackers for a Lord-Mayor's Shew; every Word in't is as hot as Gun-Powder. I am glad I'm rid on't. *[Exit.]*

Love. If this be *Friendall's* Stile, 'tis mightily mended of late: I have a Note of his about me, upon *Child*, for Money won at Play: I'll compare 'em——'Tis not his Hand neither——Nay, then there's more in't——This may be a Stratagem of his Wife's——I've seen her Hand, and think this very near it: It must be so: But then *Friendall's* coming for Satisfaction, is an Argument he might send this Challenge: But coming at the same time with it himself, is an Argument against him, that he knew nothing of the Matter. For tho' he delivers his Love-Letters, he wou'd hardly deliver his Challenges himself: And for his coming here, *Springam* might put him upon't, from a reasonable Probability that this Fellow was a Rascal. I don't know what to fix upon: This Challenge will be of use to me with the Lady: I'll take it for granted that she writ it, and proceed upon it accordingly. *[Exit.]*

SCENE *changes to St. James's Park.*

Enter Mr. Friendall, Springam, Mrs. Friendall and Mrs. Teazall.

Spring. Brother, if you have no farther Service for me, I must think of employing my self, my Walk lies another way. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. Fri. I'm glad you're rid of this Business so handsomely, Mr. *Friendall*, and that Mr. *Lovemore* was by at his begging your Pardon.

Mr. Fri. When I undertake things of this kind, I always go thro' with 'em.

Mrs. Fri. This is very well over, and I hope you will take care to keep out of 'em for the future.

Mr. Fri. Every Man has the Misfortune of 'em sometimes, Madam.

Mrs. Fri. But 'tis a prudent Man's part to keep out of the Occasion of 'em: And, in order to't, Mr. *Friendall*, I cou'd wish you wou'd not make your House, as you daily do, one of the publick Places of the Town.

Teaz. She's in the right on't indeed, Mr. *Friendall*; you

you are very happy in the Discretion of a good Lady; if you know when you're well; there are very few Women would quarrel with your good Nature in this Point; Sir; but she has too great a Regard to her own and your Reputation, you see, not to apprehend the Malice of ill Tongues upon the Liberties you allow in your Family; the graver part of your Friends take notice of it already, and let me tell you, Sir, are extremely concern'd.

Mr. Fri. That they are past the Pleasures of good Company themselves: Why really, Madam, I believe it: But they may say what they will, I shall do what I please. I live to my self, and not to the whimsical Humour of the graver part of my Friends, and so you may tell 'em good Madam, from your humble Servant. [Going]

Mrs. Fri. You won't leave us, *Mr. Friendall*?

Mr. Fri. I'll go home with you like a good Husband, Madam; but no Man of Fashion, you know, walks with his Wife; besides, there's a noble Lord I must walk with. [Exit]

Mrs. Fri. Any thing to be rid of my Company.

Teaz. Why, how have the Men, at this rate, the Impudence to think the Women should not Cuckold 'em? If I had such a Husband, as old as I am, o' my Conscience, I believe, I should use him as he deserv'd: But that's some Comfort, use him as you please, no Body will think you wrong him; and let me tell you, 'tis a great thing to have the Town on one's side.

Mrs. Fri. I'll keep 'em so, if I can.

Teaz. Nay, Faith and Troth, you have given him fair warning; if he won't take it, he must answer himself for all the Miscarriages you can be guilty of in your Conduct hereafter.

Mrs. Fri. There's something more in that, *Mrs. Teazall*. [Exit]

Enter Lovemore and Wellville following 'em.

Well. There's your *Mrs. Friendall* before us: I honour her Character as much as I despise her Husband's.

Love. Tho' he has 'scap'd the publick Discovery, if she knows him to be a Coward, it does my Business still as well.

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Well. If I did not think him one, I wou'd put him to a Trial he shou'd not so easily get clear of; for putting a Note into Mrs. *Sightly's* Hand at the Musick-meeting.

Love. How!

Well. But I owe him a good Turn for it.

Love. It comes into my Head, and you shall pay him the good Turn: What if you put Mrs. *Sightly* upon telling his Wife of it?

Well. Ha!

Love. You ought to do so.

Well. I think so too my self; and you may be satisfy'd I'll do't; more out of a regard to the Woman I value so much, than any design of promoting your Cuc-kolding the Fool.

Love. Good grave Sir, the Plot is never the worse, I hope, for carrying your Friend's Interest along with the Ladies.

Well. Make your best use on't, *Lovemore*, I'm contented we shou'd thrive together. [Exit.

Enter Mrs. *Sightly* and *Witwoud* after 'em.

Wit. You are mightily injur'd indeed, Madam, to be persuaded to come abroad, so much to your disadvantage, such a delicate Morning as this is, so much against your Inclinations: But you'll know your Int'rest better in a little time, and me for your Friend, I suppose, when you find the Benefit of it.

Sight. Nay, Cousin, the Injury may be forgiven, for the Pleasure of the Walk, at this time of the Year.

Wit. Why, the very Walk is to be lik'd, tho' there were no Body in it to like us. But there's a great deal of good Company in the Mall, and I'll warrant you we'll have our share of the Commendation of the Place, in spite of fresher Faces: You are sure of your part of it already.

Sight. How so, good Mrs. *Witwoud*?

Wit. Why, good Mrs. *Sightly*, there's Mr. *Wellville* before you.

Sight. My Platonick Lover, as you call him.

Wit. And as you find him.

Sight. I think him very much my Friend.

Wit. Very much your Friend! I grant you indeed, every Woman, that is not wholly insensible, (and one would

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would not be thought insensible you know,) every Woman ought to have a Platonick Passion for one Man or other: But a Platonick Lover in a Man! is——

Sight. What, pray?

Wit. Why, he is a very unmannerly Fellow; he is not what he should be, that's certain: As for the matter of Respect, which we keep such a clutter about, and seem to value so much in the Men, all that I know of it, is, that if any Man pretended to follow and like me, I should never believe what he said, if he did not do something to convince me: I should think he affronted me extremely, if upon the first handsome Occasion, he did not offer me every thing in his Power.

Sight. How, Cousin!

Wit. I hate a Blockhead, that will never give a Woman a reputable Occasion of refusing him: 'Tis one of the best Compliments a Lover can make his Mistress's Pride, and I never knew any Man, that did his Business without it.

Sight. Why *Witwoud*, thou are mad sure.

Wit. Not for your Mr. *Wellvile*; if I were in your Place, I should have something the better Opinion of him, if he would have a little worse Opinion of me: But between you and me, I should not like him for a Lover.

Sight. He does not pretend to be one.

Wit. Who's here? *Wilding* and *Courtall* behind us? That *Wilding*, Cousin, is a very pretty Gentleman.

Sight. And *Courtall* too, very well.

Wit. I must bring you acquainted with *Wilding*.

Sight. No more Acquaintance, good *Witwoud*.

Wit. For his Discretion, and Conduct, his good Behaviour, and all that, *Wellvile* is his Acquaintance, and will answer for: But his agreeable, easy Wit, and good Humour, you may take upon my Word: You'll thank me, when you know him.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Wilding and Courtall.

Wild. She's a Woman of her Word: You see she has brought Mrs. *Sightly* along with her.

Court. I never doubted it: She'll carry her to Supper in a night or two: She's never the worse Bawd, I hope, for being a Gentlewoman.

Wild.

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Wild. A good Family indeed gives a Countenance to the Profession; and a Reputation is necessary to carry on the Credit of a Trade.

Court. Here's *Wellvile* just behind us.

Wild. Pr'ythee stay with him: I'll tell you how I thrive. [Exit,

Enter Wellvile.

Well. Good-morrow Mr. *Courtall*.

Court. O Sir, yours.

Well. Was not that *Wilding* left you?

Court. He's in his Employment, Sir, very busy.

Well. In pursuit of the Women, I know: It hardly answers the Expence, I doubt.

Court. You have no reason to say so: There's a Lady before us, of your Acquaintance, Mrs. *Sightly* by Name, of another Opinion: I suppose, she thinks such an Assurance, as his, in coming to the Point, is more to the Nature of the thing, than all your Ceremony and Respect.

Well. Mrs. *Sightly*!

Court. She, Sir, the very same: I could tell you a Secret, *Wellvile*; but you are one of those Fellows, that hate another Man should lie with a Woman, tho' you never attempt her your self: I confess I am something of your Mind: I think the Enjoyment the dull Part of an Intrigue, and therefore I give it over, when I see the Lady in earnest.

Well. But the Secret, *Courtall*.

Court. Why Faith, *Wellvile*, if you have Temper to manage it, the Secret may be of use to you: *Wilding*, you know, never debauches a Woman, only for himself: where he visits, in a little time every Man may be received in his turn. You must know, 'twas *Witwoud* put him upon Mrs. *Sightly*, she knew what she did, I suppose, and has promis'd him a good Office in her way: Make your Advantage of what I tell you; but not a Syllable to any one.

Enter Springam.

Spring. O, *Courtall*! here are a Couple of Vizard-Masks have set upon me in the next Walk, and I wanted thee to take one of 'em off my Hands.

Court. I'll stand by you, my noble Captain. [Exeunt.
Well.

Well. (solus) I'll think no more on't, 'tis impossible: What's impossible? Nothing's impossible to a Woman: We judge but on the outside of that Sex; and know not what they can, nor what they do, more than they please to shew us. I have known Mrs. *Sighly* these seven Years — known her! I mean, I have seen her, observ'd her, follow'd her: May be there's no knowing a Woman: But in all that time, I never found a Freedom that allow'd me any Encouragement beyond a Friend — May be I have been wanting to my self — But then she would not throw her self away upon a common Lover; that's not probable: If she had not been affectedly reserv'd, I would suspect, the Devil in her Heart had stamp't the Sign of Virtue in her Looks, that she might cheat the World; and sin more close. But she is open in her Carriage, easy, clear of those Arts that have made Lust a Trade — Perhaps that Openness may be Design — 'Tis easy to raise Doubts — And still she may be — I won't think she can — 'till I know more: But *Witwoud* is, I know her, every thing that's mischievous; abandon'd and undone; undone her self, she wou'd undo the Sex: She is to bawd for *Wilding*: I know her bad enough for any Trade. But Bawds have some good Nature, and procure Pleasure for pay: *Witwoud* has baser Ends, a general Ruin upon all her Friends. [Several pass over the Stage,

Mr. Friendall *sighted by 'em, one after another.*

1 *Lord.* I have a little Business at present; but I shall see you at the Play. [Exit.

Mr. Fri. In the King's Box, my Lord — My dear Lord, I'm your humble Servant. [To another.

2 *Lord.* Another time, good Mr. *Friendall*; you see I'm engag'd. [Exit.

Mr. Fri. A Pox o'their Engagements: A Man can't make one among 'em. O my most noble Lord.

3 *Lord.* I know you will upbraid me, Mr. *Friendall*; but I'll recover your Opinion, and come and dine with you. Let's have *Jack Dryden* and *Will. Wicherly*, as you call 'em: Some of these Days, we'll be very witty together: But now I am your Servant. [Exit.

Mr. Fri. This is a very unfortunate Morning with me: I have not walk'd one turn with a Lord, since I came in;

I see I must take up with the Men of Wit to Day——

O Mr. *Wellvile*!

Well. Don't let me keep you from better Company.

Mr. Fri. Faith, Sir, I prefer a Man of Wit, to a Man of Quality at any time.

Well. If she thinks *Witwoud* her Friend, after this, 'tis a sign she's pleas'd with it, and there's an end on't.

Mr. Fri. Why, *Wellvile*, thou art *cogitabund*, as a Man may say; thy Head is running upon thy Poetry.

Well. I beg your Pardon, Sir, I did not mind you indeed. Your Servant, Mr. *Wilding*.

Wilding enters to 'em.

Mr. Fri. *Wilding*, yours. But *Wellvile*, pr'ythee, what is't to be? A Song? A Tribute to the whole Sex? or a particular Sacrifice? or is't a Libel upon the Court, ha? (we'll keep your Council;) or a Lampoon upon the Town? What, I am a great Honourer and humble Servant of the Muses my self——

Well. A very Favourite of 'em; I hear, Sir.

Mr. Fri. I sometimes scribble indeed, for my Diversion——

Wild. And the Diversion of the Ladies, Mr. *Friendall*.—

Well. And the Diversion of all the Town, Mr. *Friendall*.

Mr. Fri. Why, Faith Gentlemen, Poetry is a very pretty Amusement, and, in the way of Intrigue, or so, among the better Rank of People, I have known a Paper of Verses go farther with a Lady in a Purchase of a Favour, than a Present of fifty Pounds would have done.

Wild. O, Sir, 'tis the only way of purchasing a Woman that is not to be bought.

Mr. Fri. But, *Wellvile*, pr'ythee communicate, Man.

Well. Why, if you will have it, I have a Design upon a Play.

Mr. Fri. Gad so, let me write a Scene in it: I have a thousand times had it in my Head, but never could bring it about to write a Play yet.

Wild. No; no; you had it not in your Head, Sir.

Mr. Fri. I-vow to Gad, but I have then, twenty times, I'm confident; but one thing or other always kick'd it out again: But I promise you, I'll write a Scene for you.

Wild.

Wild. Before you know the Subject?

Mr. Fri. Pr'ythee, what is't? But be what it will, here's my Hand upon it, I'll write it for you.

Well. You must know then, Sir, I am scandaliz'd extremely to see the Women upon the Stage make Cuckolds at that insatiable Rate they do in all our modern Comedies: Without any other Reason from the Poets, but because a Man is married he must be a Cuckold: Now Sir, I think, the Women are most unconscionably injur'd by this general Scandal upon their Sex; therefore to do 'em what Service I can in their Vindication, I design to write a Play, and call it——

Mr. Fri. Ay, what, I beseech you, I love to know the Name of a new Play.

Well. *The Wives Excuse: Or, Cuckolds make Themselves.*

Mr. Fri. A very pretty Name faith and troth; and very like to be popular among the Women.

Wild. And true among the Men.

Mr. Fri. But what Characters have you?

Well. What Characters? Why I design to shew a fine young Woman marry'd to an impertinent, nonsensical, silly, intrigueing, cowardly, good-for-nothing Coxcomb.

Wild. This blockhead does not know his own Picture.

[Aside.]

Mr. Fri. Well, and how? She must make him a Cuckold, I suppose.

Well. 'Twas that I was thinking on when you came to me.

Mr. Fri. O, yes, you must make him a Cuckold.

Wild. By all means a Cuckold.

Mr. Fri. For such a Character, Gentlemen, will vindicate a Wife in any thing she can do to him. He must be a Cuckold.

Well. I am satisfied he ought to be a Cuckold; and indeed if the Lady would take my Advice, she should make him a Cuckold.

Mr. Fri. She'll hear Reason, I warrant her.

Well. I have not yet determin'd how to dispose of her. But in regard to the Ladies, I believe I shall make her honest at last.

Mr. Fri.

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Mr. Fri. I think the Ladies ought to take it very ill of you, if you do: But if she proves honest to the last, that's certain, 'tis more than the Fellow deserves. A very pretty Character this, faith and troth. [*To Wilding.*

Wild. And very well known in this Town.

Mr. Fri. Gad, I believe I can help you to a great many hints, that may be very serviceable to you.

Well. I design to make use of you: We, who write Plays, must sometimes be beholden to our Friends. But more of this at leisure.

Mr. Fri. Will you walk, Gentlemen? the Ladies are before us.

Well. I have a little Business with *Wilding*. We'll follow you. [*Exit Friendall.*

Wild. Business with me, *Willvoile*?

Well. About a fair Lady, I'll tell you as we walk. [*Ex. Enter Lovemore with Mrs. Friendall, Mrs. Sighly, Mrs. Witwoud, and Mrs. Teazall.*

Teaz. Nay, indeed, *Mr. Lovemore*, as matters are managed between the Men and Women of the Town, 'tis no less a Blessing for a Lady to have a Husband that will but so much as offer to fight for her and her Honour, than 'tis for a Husband to have a Lady, that has any Honour to defend: There's such a depravity in Matrimony, o'both sides, now-a-days.

Sight. Why, good Madam, is it such a Business, for a Man to offer to fight for his Wife?

Wit. All that I know is, the Man that would not fight for me, should do nothing else for me.

Teaz. You'll have your Wit, let who's will blush for't.

Love. As you say, Madam, [*to Mrs. Teazall.*] a Man of Honour is a great Blessing in a Husband; such as *Mr. Friendall* has shewn himself to be. And here's a Lady will value the Blessing as it deserves.

Mrs. Fri. I must indeed despise him in my Thoughts. [*Aside.*

Wit. Fulsom and foolish! let's hear no more on't: They don't think this can blind us? [*Walking off with Sighly.*

Love. If you were not inclin'd to it before, Madam, this last Behaviour of his would engage you to value such a Blessing as you ought. *Mrs. Fri.*

Mrs. Fri. My Duty would engage me ——— What does he mean by this?

Wit. Cousin *Teazall*, your Opinion pray.

Love. I have something to tell you, Madam, if you would but allow me; this is no place.

Mrs. Fri. You'll find a time I warrant you. Ladies, the Mall begins to thin. [Goes to 'em.]

Wellvile and Wilding coming forward.

Wild. Well, Sir, since you declare your self in love with the Lady, and I am not, I promise you, and you may trust me, I'll never follow her more.

Well. I do trust, and thank you for the Promise. Ladies, your Servant. [He addresses to Slightly.]

Wit. O! he's come at last. [Witwoud to Wilding.]

There's nothing to be done here; you've outstaid your time; but we'll call at the Chocolate-house in St. *Albans-street*, as we go home; you may meet us there by accident, you know.

Wild. If I were to be hang'd now, I must meet 'em there; tho' I have given my Word to the contrary.

Teaz. Is that the filthy Fellow?

Wit. That's *Wilding*, Madam.

Teaz. I see there's no knowing a Whoremaster by his Face; he looks like a modest, civil Gentleman.

Well. Your Friend *Mrs. Witwoud*, Madam, [To Slightly] may be of that good-natur'd Opinion that *Love* more is familiar with the Husband, only to be more familiar with the Wife. But you must be cautious of what you say; for fear we turn the Scandal upon you.

Sight. Upon me, Mr. *Wellvile*?

Well. Pardon me, Madam, I have the Freedom of a Friend: But Mr. *Friendall* declares he is in love with you; and after that, the good-natur'd Town (whatever they believe) will go near to say, that your Familiarity with his Wife may be in order to the Husband.

Sight. Contemptible! Sure no body would think so!

Well. 'Tis an ill-natur'd Age to handsome Women, Madam.

Sight. Must I suffer, because he's a Fool?

Well. You may suffer, because he's a Fool.

Sight. This is not only to be accountable for our own Conduct,

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Conduct, but to answer for all the Infiscration of the Mens.

Well. You must, Madam, for those Men's you allow to be so near you.

Sight. It would be but an ungrateful piece of News to Mrs. Friendall, if I should be serious enough to tell her of it.

Well. 'Twould be more ungrateful to her, if any body else did; and would go near to make you serious, if another should tell her for you.

Sight. But who can tell? It may be the Cause of a Breach between them.

Well. Nay, Madam, if it be considerable enough to make a Breach in Marriage, you may be sure 'twill make a Breach in Friendship: And how much that will be to the Advantage of your Reputation upon such an Occasion.

Sight. I am convinc'd you are my Friend, Mr. Well-vile, and thank you for this care of me.

[*They mingle with Lovemore, Mrs. Friendall, and the rest.*]

Wit. This is the Aunt would ha'been upon your Bones, I assure you, if I had not deliver'd you.

Wild. How shall I do to appease her?

Wit. There's but one way now to please her. You must know she has been in her time, like other Women, in at most of the Pleasures of this Town; but being too passionate a Lover of the Sport, she has been—a Bubble at all Games: And having now nothing to lose but her Money, she declares for *Lanterloo*, and is contented to be only cheated at Cards.

Mr. Friendall with Springam and Courtall.

Mr. Fri. Why, what do you think, Ladies? these Gentlemen here, in spite of the Temptation of so much good Company, refuse to dine with me.

Spring. O Madam! are you there? [To Witwoud.

Court. Your Brother has seduc'd me, Madam.

[To Mrs. Friendall.

Spring. We'll visit you at Night, Ladies, in Masquerade; when the Privilege of a Vizard will allow us a Conversation, out of your Forms, and more to our Humour a great deal, Ladies.

[*Exeunt Spring, and Court.*

Mr. Fri.

Mr. Fri. Lovemore, Wellvoile, Wilding—you'll follow us?
Love. We won't fail you, Sir.

[*Mr. Friendall goes out with the Ladies.*]

Wis. St. Albans-street—

Wild. Will tell you more of this.

Well. Wilding, you'll take another turn with us?

Wild. Faith, no, I'm tir'd: We shall meet at *Friendall's*
all. [Exit;

Well. At *Friendall's* be it then;

Where the kind Husband welcomes every Guest.

Love. He but invites, his Wife must make the Feast.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE *Mr. Friendall's House.*

All the Company enters after Dinner.

Love. **M***R. Friendall,* you have the best Wines, and
the greatest choice of any Man in Town.

Mr. Fri. There's an Elegance in Eating and Drinking,
Gentlemen, as well as in Writing.

Well. Or your Stile will never go down. [*Aside.*]

Mr. Fri. How did you like the *Lucina* I gave you,
the *Gallicia*, the *Mountain-Alicant*? You taste the Sun in
them perfectly, Gentlemen.

Wild. O plainly, Sir!

Mr. Fri. Then the *Aracina*, the *Ranchio*, and the *Peral-
ta*, the *Carcavelis*, the *Lacryma*, the *Schiveas*, the *Zepha-
lon'a*, the *Montalchyno*, with all the *Muschatellos*, and to
conclude, my single Bottle of *Tockay*.

Love. Admirable all, Sir.

Mr. Fri. A Friend of mine, that brought the *Tockay*
from *Buda*, assures me, the Stones of all those Grapes
are Gold.

Well. That makes the Wine so scarce.

Mr. Fri. Nay, not unlikely: But of all the Wines of
all the Climates under the Sun—

Wild. Give me the *Greek*.

Mr. Fri. O, I abominate—

Well.

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Well. The Language, but not the Wines; you may relish them without it.

Mr. Fri. Ay, that may be: But of all the Wines, Pagan, or Christian, in the World, I think the *Borackia* the noblest.

Well. 'Tis of the roughest kind indeed, of Beasts, wou'd he were in the Skin of one of 'em,

Wild. But your *Vine de Congress*, *Mr. Friendall*—

Mr. Fri. True; but 'tis a *Dutch* Wine, and grows in the Province of *Zealand*, I have drank it upon the Place.

Wild. But, *Mr. Friendall*, pray in all your variety and interest among your Friends in the City, have you not sometimes met with such a Wine, as the *Vine de Shorneck*?

Mr. Fri. *Vine de Shorneck*? Yes, I have drank of it at *Thompson's*, and was the first that took notice of it; but 'tis a prohibited *French* Wine, and I have too great an Acquaintance with the Members of Parliament, not to drink according to Law.

Wild. Yours is very good Snuff, *Mr. Friendall*.

Mr. Fri. Yes, truly, I think 'tis pretty good Powder.

Wild. Pray your Opinion of mine, you are a Critick.

Mr. Fri. This is *Havana* indeed; but then 'tis wash'd: Give me your dry Powders, they never lose their Scent: Besides, yours is made of the Leaves of the Tobacco—

Well. Why, what the Devil's yours?

Mr. Fri. Mine, Sir, is tight *Palillio*, made of the Fibres, the Spirituous part of the Plant; there's not a Pinch of it out of my Box in *England*; 'twas made, I assure you, to the Palate of His Most Catholick Majesty, and sent me by a great Don of *Spain*, that's in his Prince's particular Pleasures.

[Goes to the Women.]

Well. And his, it seems, lies in his Nose.

Mr. Fri. Ladies, what say you to the Fresko of the Garden; We'll drink our Tea upon the Mount, and be the Envy of the Neighbourhood.

Wit. O delicately thought upon!

Mr. Fri. Madam, which Tea shall we have?

Mrs. Fri. Which the Company pleases, *Mr. Friendall*.

Mr. Fri. The plain *Canton*, the *Nanquin*, the *Bohea*, the *Lantheroon*, the *Sunloe*, or which? Ha!

Well. Have you any of the *Non Amo Te*?

Mr. Fri. Faith,

Cuckolds make Themselves.

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Mr. Fri. Faith, no, Sir, there came but little of it over this Year; but I am promis'd a whole Canister by a Friend of a considerable Interest in the Committee.

Love. Then the *Bohea*, Sir, the *Bohea* will do our Business.

Mr. Fri. My *Bohea*, at the best Hand too, cost me ten Pound a Pound; but I have a Tea with a damn'd Heathenish hard Name, that I think I was very much befriended in at an *Indian House* in the City, if you please, we'll have some of that.

Mrs. Fri. 'Tis in my Cabinet, *Mr. Friendall*, I must order it my self for you. [*Goes out.*]

Mr. Fri. That, Madam, must make the Compliment the greater to the Company: *Albion*, you know the way, I wait upon you. [*All go out but Lovemore.*]

Love. This way she must come, she can't avoid me, thanks to the honest Husband. [*Mrs. Friendall returns.*]

Mrs. Fri. Are you one of the Gentlemen that love the Tea with a hard Name?

Love. Faith, Madam, I must love any thing that gives me an Opportunity

Mrs. Fri. With any Woman that has a mind to improve it?

Love. Of adoring you.

Mrs. Fri. Me, *Mr. Lovemore*! I was going before, but now you drive me.

Love. Stay, this Violence, if you can call it Violence on my Knees, excuses you to all your Female Forms; nay, to your self, severer than your Form, if you should stay and hear me.

Mrs. Fri. Well, what's the Matter?

Love. Every thing is Matter of your Praise, the subject of fresh Wonder: Your Beauty made to tire the Painter's Art, your Wit to strike the Poet's Envy dumb.

Mrs. Fri. Are you turn'd Poet too?

Love. Indeed you can inspire me

Mrs. Fri. With the Spirit of Scandal I may, a small matter Conjures up a Lampoon against the Women— But to the purpose, Sir; you pretend Business with me, and have insinuated a great deal of pains all this Day to get an occasion of speaking to me in private; which now, by *Mr. Friendall's* Assistance, you think you have ingeniously secur'd: Why, Sir, after all, I know no

Busi-

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Business between us that is to be carry'd on, by my being alone with you.

Love. I'm sorry for that indeed, Madam.

Mrs. Fri. Suppose, Mr. *Lovemore*, a Man shou'd hit you a Box on the Ear.

Love. Only suppose it, good Madam.

Mrs. Fri. Why, Sir, any Man that's Brute enough may do it; tho' that Brute should beg your Pardon never so publickly for the Wrong, you wou'd never heartily forgive him for pitching upon you.

Love. Not heartily, I believe indeed.

Mrs. Fri. Why, very well: You keep me here against my Will, against all Rules of Decency to me, my Sex, and Character; the worst of Wrongs; yet you will think it hard to be condemn'd, or hated, for your light Opinion of me, that first encourag'd you to this Design.

Love. Hated for loving you!

Mrs. Fri. Ay, there's the Business: Who wou'd not stay to see her Worshipper upon his Knees, thus prais'd, and ador'd? Her Beauty made to tire the Painter's Art, her Wit to strike the Poet's Envy dumb; and all deliver'd in such a dying tone, no Lady can out-live it? Mr. *Lovemore*, you might have known me better, than to imagine your sly Flattery could softly sing me into a Consent to any thing my Virtue had abhorr'd. But how have I behav'd my self? What have I done to deserve this? What Encouragement have I given you?

Love. A Lover makes his Hopes.

Mrs. Fri. Perhaps 'tis from the general Encouragement of being a marry'd Woman, supported on your side by that honourable Opinion of our Sex, that because some Women abuse their Husbands, every Woman may. I grant you indeed, the Custom of *England* has been very prevailing in that Point; and I must own to you an ill Husband is a great Provocation to a Wife, when she has a mind to believe as ill of him as she can.

Love. How if the Wife believe too well of him?

Mrs. Fri. Why then the Folly's hers: For my part, I have known Mr. *Friendall* too long, not to know justly what he deserves; I won't justify his Faults, but because he does not take that care of me he shou'd, must
not

not I have that regard to my self I ought? What I do is for my own sake: Nay what is past, which, by your hints, I know you do suspect, I own I did it; not for the Commendation of your Wit, nor as a Debt to him, but to my self, foreseeing a long Life of Infamy, which in his Follies I was marry'd to; and therefore sav'd my self by saving him.

Love. Your Conduct every way is excellent, but there it was a Master-piece indeed, and worthy Admiration.

Mrs. Fri. And wou'd you have me lose that Character, so worthy your Admiration, which, even you, an Enemy, must praise, when you wou'd ruin? No; what I've done to raise this Character, may be an Argument I will do more to heighten it, to the last Act of Life.

Love. And all for the Reward of being thought too good a Wife to such a Husband.

Mrs. Fri. How! you know him then?

Love. You and I know him.

Mrs. Fri. Fit to bear a Wrong? Is that the Reason of your wronging him? I want but that; O let me but believe you injure him, because you know you may; and attempt me, because you think it safe; and I will scorn you low, as you do him: You say you know him: Now, Sir, I know you, you, and your Practices against us both: You have encourag'd all that has been done, exposing him, only to ruin me. 'Tis necessary to believe as ill of you as I can: And for the future, 'till you clear your self——

Love. I can clear my self.

Mrs. Fri. I'll think you capable of every thing; of any Baseness to advance your Ends; so leave you to your Triumph.

[*Going.*

Love. Madam, stay, I must be justify'd: This Challenge here has taught me all I know; made me suspect who writ it, and presume all I have said to you.

Mrs. Fri. Where had you it?

Love. *Ruffle* gave it me, I hope you may forgive my knowing it, since by resigning it into your Hands, I give you up the only Evidence that can rise up against him: Such a piece of News, Madam, wou'd have been welcome enough to the Ill nature of the Town; and I

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might have had my Ends in such a Report, had I encourag'd the exposing him: But when I saw how near you were concern'd, I had no other Pleasure but the Thought of serving you; if I have serv'd you, I am over-paid; if not, I must serve on: For I but live to serve you.

Mrs. Fri. My Employment calls upon me; are not you for Tea?

Two Footmen enter with a Service of Tea, and go out with Mrs. Friendall.

Love. I find I am restor'd; but I was reduc'd to the necessity of a Lie to come into Favour again; but that's a Necessity that every Man of Honour must submit to sometimes, that has any thing to manage with the Women: For a Lover, that never speaks more than the Truth, is never believ'd to be a Lover: And he that won't lie to his Mistress, will hardly lye with her: So let his Honesty reward him; the Lady won't, I dare say for her. There must be a cheat upon the Sense sometimes, to make a perfect Pleasure to the Soul: For if the Women did but always know what really we are, we shou'd not so often know so much of them as we do: But 'tis their own Faults; they know we can't live without 'em, and therefore ask more of us than we have honestly to give for the Purchase. So, very often, they put us upon Dissimulation, Flattery and false Love, to come up to their Price. *Mrs. Friendall* went away a little abruptly: I'm glad she did: For that methinks confesses an Obligation which she has not yet in her Power to return.

Enter Wellvile to him.

Well. Lovemore, your Plot begins to thrive: I left *Mrs. Sighly* telling *Mrs. Friendall* every thing between her and *Mr. Friendall*: I thought fit to acquaint you with it, that you might be prepar'd: You know best what Use to turn it to: My Business is with *Mrs. Sighly*.

Love. I thank you for the News: They're coming this way, I wou'd not have 'em see us: I must hover here.

[Exeunt Love, and Wellv.

Enter Mrs. Friendall and Mrs. Sighly.

Mrs. Fri. I cou'd not have believ'd it.

Sight. I am sorry you have Reason to believe it upon my Account: Indeed, I was unwilling to believe it; I
sus-

suffer'd it as long as I cou'd; but finding no end of this Persecution——

Mrs. Fri. You have us'd me like a Friend, and I thank you—his Note since Dinner desires you wou'd meet him at Seven, at *Rosamond's Pond*: You can't be so hard-hearted to disappoint him?

Sight. If you have a mind to have a plainer Proof of his Treachery——

Mrs. Fri. The Proof is plain enough: You say it: Besides he has given it under his Hand here; and I believe the Gentleman, tho' you won't.

Sight. Or if you wou'd, let him know you have discover'd him, and upbraid him with his Baseness before me—

Mrs. Fri. That wou'd but harden him, or make him vain, by shewing a Concern for him.

Sight. If you have any Curiosity to be satisfy'd I'll go with you to the Place appointed.

Mrs. Fri. I wou'd not have him know either of us.

Sight. Then we must have a Man to secure us.

Mrs. Fri. We may trust your Friend *Mr. Wellvile*.

Sight. *Mr. Friendall*, you must know, thinks him in love with me; so being a Rival, may make him avoid us: But *Mr. Lovemore* will do as well.

Mrs. Fri. I wou'd not have him know it.

Sight. He knows it already; I made no Secret of it, and *Mr. Wellvile* told it him.

Mrs. Fri. Then he, or any one——

Enter Lovemore to 'em.

Sight. O! here he comes: *Mr. Lovemore*, we must employ you this Afternoon.

Love. To serve my self, in waiting upon you.

The rest of the Company enters to 'em.

Teaz. Well, here's such a Clutter to get you to Cards: You have drank your Tea: What will you do next, I trow?

Wit. Why take a Napp, or smoak a Pipe, any body that has a mind to be private.

Teaz. Wou'd I had one civilly in a Corner.

Mr. Fri. Get the Cards in the Drawing-room. [*To a Serv.*]

Wit. Not 'till we have the Song, *Mr. Friendall*, you promis'd us.

Mr. Fri. Why, Faith, I was forc'd to set it my self:

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I don't know how you'll like it with my Voice ; but Faith and Troth, I believe the Masters of the Musick-meeting may set their own Words, for any trouble I shall give 'em for the future about mine.

Wild. Nay, then you ruin 'em.

Wit. The Song, the Song, Sir.

SONG written by a Man of Quality.

I.

SAY, cruel Amoret, how long
In Billet-dous, and humble Song,
Shall poor Alexis woo ?
If neither writing, sighing, dying,
Reduce you to a soft complying :
O ! when will you come to ?

II.

Full thirteen Moons are now past o'er,
Since first those Stars I did adore,
That set my Heart on fire :
The conscious Play-house, Parks and Court,
Have seen my Sufferings made your Sport ;
Yet am I ne'er the nigher.

III.

A faithful Lover shou'd deserve
A better fate, than thus to starve
In sight of such a Feast :
But Oh ! if you'll not think it fit,
Your hungry Slave should taste one Bit ;
Give some kind Looks at least.

Wild. Admirable well——

Wit. Sett and sung, Sir.

Love. A Gentleman does these things always best.

Wild. When he has a Genius.

Mr. Fri. Ay, Sir, he must have a Genius : There's no being a Master of any thing without a Genius.

Mrs. Fri. Mrs. Teazall, Pam wants you in the next Room.

[Scene draws, shews Tables and Cards.]

Teaz. I'll make the more of him, when I get him into my Hands.

Well. I have something to tell you, worth more than the

the Cards can win for you.

[To Mrs. Sightly.]

Mrs. Fri. Who's for Comet?

Love. I am your Man, Madam.

Mrs. Fri. You play too deep for me.

Wit. Cousin, you'll make one of us?

Sight. I go your Halves, if you please, I don't care for playing my self. [They go to play. The Scene shuts upon 'em. Wellvile and Sightly stay.]

Sight. Now, Mr. Wellvile, you have something extraordinary to say to me.

Well. I have indeed, Madam; but I shou'd prepare you for the Story, there are some Friends in it, that you will be concern'd to have an ill Opinion of.

Sight. I have reason to think you my Friend.

Well. Then pray give me leave to ask, how long you have known Mr. Wilding?

Sight. I never spoke to him 'till this Morning at the Chocolate-house, as we came from the Park.

Well. I think he's Mrs. Witwoud's particular Acquaintance.

Sight. That, I suppose, gave him his Title of speaking to us.

Well. And she has a Mind to bring him acquainted with you. I'm sorry I must warn you of him: I was in hopes it wou'd have dy'd of it self; But his talking to you, at the Chocolate-house, after he had promis'd never to follow you more, makes me apprehend, that he is still carrying on his Design upon you.

Sight. A Design upon me!

Well. He has a Design upon you: And you have heard enough of his Character, to suspect the Honour of any Design he has upon any Woman: But such as it is, your Cousin Witwoud, and very good Friend, for Ends of her own, which I can inform you in, has undertaken to bring it about. I see you are surpriz'd.

Sight. I pray, Sir, go on.

Well. I never pretended to be a Friend of Mrs. Witwoud's, but now I hate her: And what I tell you, is not to ruin her with you; but of nearer Consequence, to save you from being undone by her: This is not a Secret; I'll tell her of it my self, and my Thoughts of her into the Bargain: But, Madam, you know best, how far she

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has solicited his Cause to you ; how far my Story is probable ; and whether you don't think, she persuaded you to walk this Morning in the *Mall*, in order to meet Mr. *Wilding* : That was the Business of her Visit to you, as he tells me, whatever she pretended to the contrary.

Sight. You astonish me.

Well. I am astonish'd my self, indeed, Madam, not to find her as I always thought her, fit for any Mischief : But to think she can pretend to be a Bawd, and provide no better for a Friend : To sacrifice you to a Man, who wou'd tell all the Town of it, as well as *Courtall*, and has confess'd to me, that he never was in love with you, nor had a thought that way, 'till she put it into his Head, and promis'd to assist him in't.

Sight. Unheard of Villany !

Well. Faith, Madam, if I might advise you, it shou'd be to a Man of Honour at least ; that can be so tender of a Reputation, not to lessen a Lady's Favour so far, to make it the common Mirth of the Town : If you have any Favours to dispose of, dispose of 'em your self : Let not another run away with the Benefit of your good Turns : I have been an old Admirer, Madam ; and I hope stand as fair, and have as good a Title to put in my Claim, as any Man of her providing.

Sight. So, Sir, then it seems you think I must be provided for, and therefore these Advances must please me : I have some reason to believe what you say of my Cousin *Witwoud*, but I have no reason to think you very much my Friend ; she has betray'd me, and you are pleas'd to think I deserve it : I thank you for your Caution ; but it shall secure me for the future, against her and you : For, as much as I thought you my Friend, nay, though I languish'd for you, the encouragement you are pleas'd to make, from other People's base Opinion of me, shall teach me to despise you. [*The Scene opens, the Company rises from play, and comes forward.*]

Tenz. Nay, nay, I have done with you : If this be your fair Play, there's no danger of your Soul ; why, you make no Conscience of cheating any Body out of your own Gang.

Wit. Conscience at Cards, Cousin ! you are a better bred Lady than to expect it.

Mr. Fri.

Cuckolds make Themselves.

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Mr. Fri. Conscience, Madam, is for serious Affairs, no Body minds it at play.

Teaz. Nay I'm ev'n right enough serv'd, I deserv'd it, that's the truth on't : I must be playing with Company so much younger than my self ; but I shall be wiser for the future, and play the Fool in my own form, where I may Cheat in my turn.

Mrs. Fri. If you speak of your Losings, Madam, I believe my Fortune has been harder than yours ; in ten Sets running with *Mr. Wilding*, I never turn'd one, nor had Comet in my Hand.

Wit. Nay, if you win her Money, you may win every thing of her, if you know how to manage your Game.

[Goes to *Mrs.* Sightly.]

Wild. And Faith I'll play it as well as I can.

Wit. Cousin, I have won an Estate for you.

Sight. You have undone me. [Exit, *Wit.* following.]

Wild. I'll watch my time, and follow 'em.

Mr. Fri. Lovemore, pr'ythee keep the Company together ; I have an Appointment upon my Hands, and must leave you : We must serve one another sometimes, you know.

[Goes off.]

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, the Jew, newly turn'd Protestant, that my Master was Godfather to, has brought the Essences and Sweet-waters he order'd him to raffle for.

Mrs. Fri. Shall we try whether we like any of 'em.

[Going.]

Well. We shall find him a Jew still in his Dealings, I suppose.

Love. You wou'd not have him lose by his Conversion, I hope.

Wild. Like other wise Men, he's for saving Soul and Body together, I warrant him.

[They go in]

SCENE changes to the Garden.

Witwoud following *Sightly*.

Sight. Never think of denying, or excusing it to me, I am satisfied there's more in it than you ought to defend ; there are so many Circumstances to convince me of your Treachery to me, I must believe it.

D 4

Wit. I

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Wit. I see, Cousin, you will believe any thing against me: But as I hope to be sav'd, upon the Faith of a Christian, and may I never rise off my Knees into your good Opinion again, if I don't abhor the Villany you lay to my Charge; something I must confess to you, but I beg you to forgive me; 'twas unadvis'd indeed, but innocent, and without a Design upon you: *Courtall's* a Coxcomb, and nothing but *Wilding's* Vanity, or *Wellvile's* Revenge, could be accessory to the Ruin of me with you, the only Relation I love and value in the World.

Sight. O! I had forgot the Pains you took to secure me, to Morrow Night at Cards, at your Lodgings with *Mr. Wilding*: Cousin, let me tell you, a Bawd is the worst part of an Intrigue, and the least to be said for't in excuse of the Infamy. But you had something more than a Lover to provide for me, or you would not have expos'd me to a Man that wou'd expose me to all the Town. Is it because I have been your best and last Friend, (for you will hardly find such another in your Family) that thus you reward me for the Folly? Or is it because I am a Witness of your Shame, that you would be a Contriver of mine? I know (and I look upon it as a Judgment upon the former Follies of your Life) that you are not notoriously abandon'd to the beastly Love of a Fellow, that no Body else can look upon; and, may be, you are mischievously pleas'd to make me as despicable as your self; there must be the Devil in the bottom on't; and I'll fly from him in you.

Wit. O! don't leave me in this Passion, I am utterly ruin'd if you go; upon my Knees I beg it of you.

Sight. Cousin, I forgive you: what's past shall be a Secret for both our sakes; but I'm resolv'd never more to come into your Power; so farewell, and find a better Friend than I have been. [Goes out.]

Wit. She's lost, and my Design upon her, which is yet a greater Misfortune to me. [Wellv. and Wild. enter to her.]
O! Sir, I am oblig'd to you—and you are oblig'd to your self for your Success with Mrs. *Sightly*; so like a Boy, to discover the Secret, before 'twas in your power to expose! Away, I'll have no more to say to you.

[Goes out.
Wild.

Wild. So, Sir, you have made fine work on't with the Woman. I thought I had satisfy'd you in the Mall this Morning.

Well. Sir, I must be better satisfy'd than I was in the Morning. I find there's no relying upon your word, since after your Promise, never to follow her more, you could excuse your self to me in the Mall to meet her at the Chocolate-house.

Wild. Nay then we have both our grievances, and this must answer 'em. [*Going to fight, Court. enters to part 'em.*]

Court. Fie, fie, Friends, and fighting! that must not be, Gentlemen. Mrs. *Witwoud* has told me the matter; and unless you had a fourth man to entertain me, you had ev'n as good put up again: We are all in Fault, and all deserve to be swing'd for't, that's certain: *Wilding* was a Fool for telling me of his Design, and I was a Fool for talking on't to *Wellvile*; and *Willvile* no wiser than either, for making such a Bustle about it: Therefore pray Gentlemen let's agree in this opinion, that by our own prating and prying into other Peoples Affairs, we often discover and ruin one another's Designs;

For Women are by Nature well inclin'd:

Our follies frighten 'em from being kind.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE *Witwoud's Lodgings.*

Enter Wilding following Witwoud.

Wit. **N**AY I don't wonder you thrive no better with the Women, when you can part with such an Advantage over Mrs. *Friendall*: You say you have won a Sum of her, which she would not be known to lose: Why, another Man would take the Privilege of a winning Gamester, upon such an Occasion, to press her to a Promise, at least, of coming out of your Debt.

Wild. I shall improve, I find, upon the Advantage of your hints: But Mrs. *Sighly*, Madam——

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Wit. Mrs. *Sightly* indeed: Was that a Woman to throw away upon the Vanity of being talk'd of for her? in the time you were bragging to other People, of being in her Favour, you might have been every-where you desir'd.

Wild. Nay, not unlikely.

Wit. I have made all the Excuse I could for you; some too, that in my Conscience I thought very unreasonable my self; and could pass upon no Body but a Woman, that was easily dispos'd to forgive you.

Wild. If she would but hear what I have to say for my self.

Wit. Nay, she's pretty well prepar'd, but you must not think of speaking to her bare-fac'd, that she can't consent to for her own sake: You have made the matter so publick, she has Eyes upon her to be sure now: But it happens very luckily, *Friendall* has a Masquerade to Night at his House: There, if you please, I can give you an Opportunity of clearing your self to her.

Wild. I ask no more of you.

Wit. Never think of defending your self, for what's past you were certainly i'th' wrong; and she thinks you so: You know well enough what to say to a Woman, that has a mind to believe you.

Wild. How shall I know her at the Masquerade?

Wit. Go you, and prepare for't: And depend upon me for your Intelligence. [*Wilding goes out.*] I find I am declining in my Reputation; and will bring every Woman of my Acquaintance into my own Condition, of being suspected at least: I have promis'd more than I can do with my Cousin *Sightly*; I have lost my Credit with her too lately, to betray her in the way of Friendship——let me see——*Betty*——

Enter Betty.

You know where the Man lives that made my Cousin *Sightly's* Scarf, go to him from me, desire him to borrow it, that a Lady may see it, who likes it, and desires to have one made of the same Pattern.——[*Exit Betty.*] I despair of bringing her to the Masquerade: I must personate her my self, and meet *Wilding* in her room: But what may be the Issue of that? Let what will be the Issue: The farther he presses his Design upon me, the farther

ther I carry my Design upon her: And for once, in order to my Revenge, rather than not expose her, I'll venture to grant him the Favour, that he may tell on't: and she have the Benefit of the Scandal—— [Goes out.]

SCENE in *St. James's Park.*

Enter Lovemore with Mrs. Friendall, and Mrs. Sightly.

Love. Yonder comes Mr. Friendall, Madam.

Mrs. Fri. Would I were at home again: I came upon a foolish Discovery of his Actions, to be surpris'd in a very unaccountable one of my own.

Sight. That is, walking *incognito* on this side the Park with a Man of your Character, Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Fri. I hope he won't know us.

[*They put on their Masks.*]

Sight. He's too busy in his own Affairs.

Love. He comes upon us. I must speak to him.

Enter Friendall.

Mr. Fri. You are provided for, I see: The Ladies, I suppose, wish I could say as much for them too: Very genteel Women both faith and troth: I warrant 'em Women of Condition, if not Women of Quality, by their Assignment of *Rosamond's Pond*.

Love. You fancy that from the Quality of your own Intrigue.

Mr. Fri. Why there's something in that too: And the Truth on't is, my Assignment is with a Woman of Quality.

Love. Mrs. Sightly, I fancy, Friendall.

Mr. Fri. Fie, fie, why should you think so? But let her be who she will, if she disappoint me, I'll own it tomorrow to every Body——

Love. That she disappointed you?

Mr. Fri. No; that 'twas Mrs. Sightly I had an Intrigue with.

Sight. A small matter makes an Intrigue of his side, I find.

Mr. Fri. Sure I have seen some-body very like this Lady? [Viewing his Wife.]

Mrs. Fri. I would not be known for the World.

Love. I'll bring you off, I warrant you.

Mr.

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Mr. Fri. She has the Air and Mein very much, of a Lady of my Acquaintance.

Love. Not unlikely, Faith: It may be she her self, for ought I know to the contrary: But if you have a mind to be satisfied—

Mrs. Fri. Lord! what do you do?

Love. I have no Occasion for her at present: This is my Woman: She's but an ill-natur'd Incumbrance at this time; and you'll do me a Favour to dispose of her.

[*To Mrs. Sightly.*

Mr. Fri. Nay, if you are so free to dispose of her, I'm satisfy'd she is not the Woman I took her for: For, to tell you the Truth, *Lovemore*, I thought 'twas my Wife: And, I' gad, I began to be very uneasy; not so much for finding her in your Company, as that she should come so peevishly to disturb me, in an Affair so very much above her.

Sight. Why, Sir, they say your Wife is a very fine Woman.

Mr. Fri. A Wife a fine Woman, Madam? I never knew a Husband that thought so in my Life.

Mrs. Fri. But some body else may, Sir, if you allow her to make those Entertainments for the Town, that I hear you do.

Mr. Fri. Gad so, *Lovemore*, pr'ythee bring the Ladies to my Masquerade to Night; there's no body but People of Quality to be there, for Pleasure is my Business, you know; and I am very well pleas'd to allow my Wife the Liberties she takes, in favour of my own; for to tell you the truth, the chief End of my Marrying her, (next to having the Estate settled upon me) was to carry on my Intrigues more swimmingly with the Ladies.

Love. That's a convenience in Matrimony, I did not think of.

Mr. Fri. One of the greatest, upon my Word, Sir. For being seen so often abroad, and visiting with my Wife. I pass upon the formal Part of the Town for a very good Husband; and upon the Privilege of that Character, I grow intimate with all her Acquaintance, (and, by the way, there's hardly a Family in Town, but I can contrive to come acquainted with, upon her account) there I pick and chuse in the very Face of their reverend Relations, and deliver my Billets my self.

Mrs.

Cuckolds make Themselves.

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Mrs. Fri. You have 'em ready then?

Mr. Fri. Two or three days always in my Pocket:—
[*Shows 'em*] I write half a Dozen in a Morning, for the Service of that Day.

Love. Hard Service, I assure you.

Mr. Fri. Not at all: the Letters are but Copies one of another; and a Love-letter should be a Love-letter, you know, passionate and tender, who-ever 'tis design'd for. Ha! yonder are two Women in Masks! I must not be seen with you: Ladies, you know when you're well, I suppose, by the Choice of your Man; make much of him, he's my Bosom-friend, and Confident in my Pleasures.

Mrs. Fri. And you of his, I suppose? There's no Pleasure without a Confident.

Mr. Fri. Faith, Madam, I am of your Mind; but *Love-more's* a little too reserved, 'tis, at present, his Fault, from a want of knowing the Town; but he'll mend of it, I hope, when he comes to have a Woman worth talking of. *Love-more*, not a Word at home of seeing me here, as you value the Fortune of your Friend. Adieu. [*Goes out.*]

Mrs. Fri. Are you the Confident of the Gentleman's Pleasures?

Love. I have not betray'd 'em, Madam.

Mrs. Fri. Methinks a Friend should have warn'd me of 'em.

Love. I would not be thought to do ill Offices, especially in Marriage, Madam.

Mrs. Fri. I don't think you would; would Mr. *Friendall* were as tender of wronging me— [*Aside.*]

Sight. You have had a handsome Account of their Expedition: And we are both oblig'd to Mr. *Friendall*.

Mrs. Fri. I am very well paid for my Curiosity of coming here: I suppose we shall have a Rendezvous of his Wenches at the Masquerade, pray let's be ready to receive 'em. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *Mr. Friendall's House.*

Men and Women in Masquerading Habits.

Enter Wellville, Wilding, Courtall, Springam, Witwould and Betty.

Wit. Wilding has his Eye upon us, I see: I have something

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thing to say to him, in my own Person, and then I must change Scarfs with you: Be sure you are i'th' way.

Well. I thought I had known you; [*To Betty*] I beg your pardon, Madam, for the mistake.

Betty. You're very welcome to't, Sir, I would have you mistaken; and that you will always be, when you judge upon the Outsides of the Women.

Well. You are for a stricter Examination, I find: There are Conveniencies for a full Discovery; in the next Room, some Body will shew you the Way. [*Leaves her.*]

Willd. That's *Sightly* in the Scarf, and *Witwoud* with her, I suppose; I must not be mistaken.

Court. I like the Freedom of a Masquerade very well, but it confounds a Man's Choice.

Spring. Why, Faith, I have a Mind to be particular, if I could but hit upon the Woman.

Wit. And that you shall presently, little Captain, I'll put my self in your Way.

Spring. Behind a Cloud, my pretty Moon! [*To Betty.* Shall I be the Man in you?

Betty. With the Bush at your Back-side: You deserve to be whipt for your Wit, Sir. [*Goes from him.*]

Spring. I stand corrected, Madam.

Wit. Does she beat thee, little Master? Come a'me, and I'll make much of thee——

Spring. As much as you can of me, I dare say for you.

Wit. Come, come, I'll use you better——

Spring. To use me worse; is not that your Design? She has given me my Answer at once; you perhaps would linger me thro' a Winter's Expectation, and not do my Business at last——

Wit. What's your Business, pray?

Spring. Why your Business, any Woman's Business, that has a Mind to employ me in't.

Wit. No touching me: I have an unfashionable Husband in the Company, that won't thank you for making him a Cuckold——

Spring. But you will, I'm sure, if it be but to teach him better Manners.

Wit. I like your Company extreamly; but I have a great deal of Business, and would willingly be rid of you,

Cuckolds make Themselves.

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you, at this Time; but this Ring shall answer for me,
till I see you again. [Going.

Spring. Pray redeem it, as soon as you can.

Wit. Sir, Sir, if you have any Interest in the Family,
pray lets have a Song, or a Dance, to divert us.

Spring. I'll see what I can do for you—— [Goes away.

Wit. You should be *Wilding*.

Wild. And you should be as good as your Word.

Wit. The Lady is better than you can expect: That's
she in the embroider'd Scarf. You must not speak to
her, before the Company; take her aside, by and by, in
a Corner; she'll thank you for your Care of her. Here's
more Company:

Enter Lovemore with Mrs. Friendall, and Mrs. Sighly.

I won't be seen with you——now *Betty* for the Change——

[*Witwoud and Betty* go out.

Well. *Lovemore*, I am in Disgrace with *Mrs. Sighly*,
and can't find her, to come into favour again.

Love. That's she, that came in just now with *Mrs. Friend-*
all: I'll direct you to one, by going to the other.

[*They go to 'em*,

A SONG, Written by *Tho. Cheek*, Esq;

Corinna, I excuse thy Face;

The erring Lines, which Nature drew:

When I reflect, that every Grace

Thy mind adorns, is just and true:

But oh! thy Wit what God has sent?

Surprizing, airy, unconfin'd:

Some Wonder sure *Apollo* meant,

And shot himself into the Mind.

A SONG in the First Scene of the Fourth Act.

Hang this whining way of wooing,

Loving was design'd a Sport:

Sighing, talking, without doing,

Makes a silly, idle Court.

Don't believe that Words can move her,

If she be not well inclin'd:

She her self must be the Lover,

To persuade her to be kind.

*If at last she grants the Favour,
And consents to be undone:*

*Never think her Passion gave her
To your Wishes, but her own.*

*After the Song, Witwoud and Betty, having chang'd Scarfs,
enter, to be ready for the Dance; after which——*

Love. Some can't get Husbands, and others can't get rid of 'em.

Mrs. Fri. Every Woman carries her Cross in this World: A Husband happens to be mine, and I must bear it, as well as I can.

Love. I would ease you of it.

Mrs. Fri. No more upon this Subject, you have carried the Argument so far, 'tis allowing what you say, to listen any longer. But Mr. Lovemore, I will give you what Satisfaction I have in my Power, and Praise is the Reward of Virtue you know; I think you have proceeded like a Man of Experience in this Business, and taken the natural Road to undermine most Women. I must do you this Justice, that nothing has been wanting on your side.

Love. I would have nothing wanting on my side, Madam.

Mrs. Fri. And however you came by the Knowledge of Mr. Friendall's Weaknesses, you have improv'd 'em as much as they could bear upon the Conduct of his Wife: If they have not carry'd me as far as you design'd, 'tis the Fault of my Heaviness, perhaps, that can't be transported into the Woman you'd have me.

Love. There's a Fault somewhere.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. Lovemore, some Women won't speak so plain, but I will own to you, I can't think the worse of you for thinking well of me: Nay, I don't blame you for designing upon me, Custom has fashion'd it into the way of living among the Men; and you may be i'th' right to all the Town: But let me be i'th' right too to my Sex and to my self: Thus far may be excus'd: You've prov'd your Passion, and my Virtue try'd; but all beyond that Trial is my Crime, and not to be forgiven: Therefore I intreat you, don't make it impossible to me for the future, to receive you as a Friend; for I must own, I would secure you always for my Friend: Nay more, I will confess my Heart to you: If I could make you mine——

Love.

Love. For ever yours.

Mrs. Fri. But I am married, only pity me——

[Goes from him.]

Love. Pity her! She does not deserve it, that won't better her Condition when she may: But she's marry'd, she says; why, that was the best of my Reasons of following her at first; and I like her so well, as she's another Man's Wife, I should hardly mend the matter by making her my own. I won't think yet my two Months thrown away upon her: One time or other, some way or other, I may be the better for her; at least with some other Women: But I begin to believe that every Man loses his Labour this way sometimes.

Sight. Who can that Woman be?

[Observing Wilding and Witwoud.]

Well. Wilding's the Man, I know.

Sight. Then it may be my good Cousin Witwoud.

Well. Presuming upon the Scarf, which is very like yours, I ventur'd, and spake to her. I should have known Mr. Witwoud, I believe.

Sight. Pray try if you can learn who she is.

They parl. in a low Voice.

Wit. This Place is too publick for a Vindication of this Nature, if you retire into the next Room, I may accept of your Excuses; upon your Promise of good Behaviour, and better Conduct for the future.

Wild. I'll follow you——

[Witwoud retires: Wellvile to Wilding.]

Well. You will be the Man I see, *Wilding:* The Lady's withdrawn; don't let her stay for you.

Wild. Faith, *Wellvile,* 'tis a Fortune thrown upon me; and since it came without my seeking, methinks you should hardly think it worth your Courting: She'll bring it about one way or other, you find.

Well. You speak as if I knew the Lady.

Wild. I would have you know so much, that she is not worth the honourable Care you have of her.

Well. Of whom?

Wild. As if you did not know her.

Well. Why, 'tis not Mrs. *Sightly.*

Wild. I have declin'd it as much I could in regard to a Friend; but when she follows me—— *Well.*

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Well. Mrs. *Sightly* follow you!

Mr. Friendall enters and joins with *Mr. Lovemore*.

Wild. No naming Names, good *Wellvile*.

Well. Nay, then I must convince you; I just left Mrs. *Sightly* to come to you; she's now in the Company, and I'll carry you to hear me speak to her —

[*Carries Wilding to Slightly.*

Love. Why this was a terrible Disappointment.

Mr. Fri. There are *Lampoons*, Sir, I say no more; but I may do my self reason in one of 'em, and disappoint her yet of her disappointment.

[*Among the Women fastens upon Slightly.*

Wild. Why then *Witwoud* has put another Woman upon me; and abus'd Mrs. *Sightly* and me: I am satisfied of the Cheat, and would be assisting to the Revengé of it if I could.

Well. You would not be the Instrument to make it publick your self?

Wild. No, that I can't consent to.

Well. Then leave it to me: *Friendall's* a Property fit for our several Interests: But *Lovemore* must employ him.

[*Wellvile to Lovemore.*

Mr. Fri. Faith, Madam, I'm very fit for your Purpose, at present, I have met with a little ill Usage from a Lady, by not meeting with her: But you may be the better for it, if you please: You shall have the Pleasure, and she have the Reputation of the Intrigue.

Sight. I am for all or none. [*Lovemore comes to him.*

Love. The rarest Accident, *Friendall*; the Reason that you were disappointed in the Park, I can tell you, was, the Lady had appointed to meet *Wilding* here; She is now withdrawn into the next Room in Expectation of him; which *Wellvile*, her old Lover, suspecting, has tax'd him of, and ruin'd the Design. Now, if you would have me, I'll keep up the Jealousie between 'em, and give you an Opportunity to go in to her.

Mr. Fri. By all means, *Lovemore*; this was unexpected, and done like a Friend; I owe you a good Turn for't; besure you keep 'em here. [*Sneaks out after Witwoud.*

Sight. What are you designing upon *Mr. Friendall*?

[*To Wellvile.*

Well.

Well. There's Mischief in't ; and you may all be the better for't. [*Mrs. Teazall pressing in with a Footman upon the Company.*]

Mrs. Fri. What's the Noise there ?

Foot. Madam, here's a rude, unmannerly Gentlewoman presses in upon me, and refuses to pull off her Mask, as your Honour order'd.

Teaz. You saucy Rascal you, I shew a better Face than thy Mother had, when she laid thee to the Parish, you Rogue : Prate to me, you Varlet ! and an honest one, tho' I say it, than any of the Company : Here's fine work indeed in a civil Family ! What, are you ashamed of your doings, that you won't discover your selves ?

Spring. Mistress, you have the natural Privilege of a Mask. And being disguised in your own Face, you may say what you please.

Teaz. Marry come up here ; will nothing but a good Face down with you ? a Woman has a fine time on't, with your finical Fancy : But I want leisure to laugh at you. [*Looking every where for her Niece.*]

Court. Do you know me ?

Teaz. Ay, ay, I guess at you : Learn to speak without a Question, you Fool, before you set up for a Wit.

Court. I know you.

Teaz. Why then you may be satisfied, I shall think you an Ass.

Spring. Nay, good Mother, you had e'en as good pull off your Mask. You see you are discover'd.

Teaz. Discover'd, you snotty-nos'd Jacanapes ! Would I could discover your Master ; I would send him a Note of your Name : You are not yet clean from School, and are setting up for the Women forsooth : You have been so us'd to be turn'd up for a Blockhead, that you are for peeping into every Bodies Back-door to find as great a Fool as your self : Sirrah, Sirrah, a good Birch Rod for your Mistress ; that wou'd tickle your Tail, as you deserve.

Spring. Nay, good your Reverence.

Mrs. Fri. What's the Matter, pray ?

Teaz. Why the wicked ways of Living in this Town, are matter enough for the Vexation of any Woman, that has a Girl to look after : God's my Life ! Can't you keep up

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up your Masquerades in the Primitive Institution of making Cuckolds, as it us'd to be, without bringing the young Wenches into the Mystery of Matrimony before their time? Where's my Niece among you? 'tis a burning Shame to draw away a poor young Girl into these debaucht galloping doings, as you do.

Mrs. Fri. Good Mrs. *Teazall*, not so censorious: Pray where's the harm of a little innocent Diversion?

Teaz. Innocent Diversion, with a Pox to't, for that will be the end on't, at last: Very innocent Diversion indeed; why, your Musick-meetings, Dancing-meetings, Masquing-meetings, are all but Pretences to bring you together: And when you meet, we know what you meet for well enough; 'tis to the same Purpose, in good troth: All ends in the innocent Diversion.

Well. Nay, Faith, the Gentlewoman has reason for what she says.

Teaz. Well, make me thankful for it; there's one civil Gentleman among you: And really there's a great deal of Comfort in opening a poor Woman's Case, to a discreet good-natur'd Gentleman: Pray, Sir, hear me; and if you don't allow that I have some cause for what I do, I will be contented never to see Coat-card, nor have Pam in my Pocket again.

Mrs. Fri. But who are you looking for all this while?

Teaz. An untowardly Girl, to be sure, my Cousin *Fanny*, Madam: She has undone her self, and my Hopes of a Husband for her: Gad forgive me, I have no Patience, when I think upon't: Last Night, *Witwoud* forsooth, she carries her to the Musick-meeting; then one *Wilding*, an impudent Whore-mastering Fellow, he carries her home with him, which I could forgive well enough too, if it ended there: But now, when all things were agreed upon, and Mr. *Buttybun* was to give us a Supper, and sign the Writings, in order to marry her to-morrow; when the Baggage was call'd upon, to perform her part, whip, she had given us the slip, tuck'd up her Tail, and run a roguing after that Fellow again: But I shall light upon her.

Love. Wilding, what say you to this?

Teaz. O, Sir, are you there? if there be any Justice in England for the Women, I'll have you bound to the good Behaviour;

Behaviour; I'll swear the Peace against you my self; for there is no body safe, young or old, at this rate, if such Whore-masters as you are allow'd to do as you do.

Wild. I am bound already to behave my self like a Gentleman: I do what good I can, in my Generation; but injure no-body.

Teaz. Sirrah, Sirrah, you shall find you have injur'd my Niece, and me, before I have done with you.

Wild. You won't bring it to *Westminster*, I hope, to be decided, who has most injur'd her; I by being civil to her; or you, by telling it to all the Town.

Teaz. Why that's true again.

Wild. And let the Company judge, who appears to be most her Enemy; I, in teaching her a very good Trade; or you, in endeavouring to break her, before she's well set up in't.

Court. Nay, now it goes against you. [To Teazall.

Wild. I have put her in a very good way; if she manages it well, she'll make more on't, than her mother made of her Matrimony.

Teaz. Nay, 'twas the Ruin of her, that I grant you.

Wild. And let the worst come to the worst, if she fails in this Calling, she may begin in another, (as they do in the City sometimes) 'tis but setting up for a Husband at last.

Teaz. But that you won't consent to, it seems.

Wild. Faith, Madam, I han't seen your Niece since Morning; and then Mrs. *Witwoud* oblig'd me to give over my Pretensions to her, upon the Promise of procuring Mrs. *Sightly* for me.

Sight. Without my Knowledge, Sir?

Wild. Indeed, Madam, you were not to know of the Bargain.

Teaz. Then you don't know where Fanny is?

Wild. Not I faith, Madam.

Well. We were just complaining of Mrs. *Witwoud's* Unkindness to you, as you came in.

Teaz. Ay, Sir, I am beholden to you.

Well. She has been very busie all this Night in carrying on the Intrigue, between your Niece and some body: They are retir'd into the next Room; they went out at that Door, if you have a Mind to be satisfy'd.

Teaz.

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Teaz. I'm sorry, Sir, I han't time to thank you for this Favour: I must make haste, for I'm resolv'd to be satisfied.

Scene draws, shews Friendall and Witwoud upon a Couch.

Very fine! here is a Sight indeed!

Wit. Confusion!

Mr. Fri. What a Pox! disturb a Gentleman's Pleasures? and in his own House too; ha! *Witwoud* here! Nay then, would you had come sooner: Madam, I beg your Pardon for some Liberties I have taken with your Ladyship: But, Faith, I took you for Mrs. *Sighly*.

Wit. I never was mistaken in you.

Wild. You see I had too great a Respect for you, and therefore provided you a more deserving——

Wit. Fool.

Well. And one that had as good-natur'd a Design upon Mrs. *Sighly*, as you had your self.

Teaz. Nay, now, Gentlewoman, I think 'tis come home to you, and I am glad on't, with all my Heart,

Sight. You have paid dear enough for that Scarf; you may keep it for a Pattern for your Friends, as 'twas borrow'd for: I won't insult over you, and am only pleas'd that I have escap'd your Snares.

Wit. That Disappointment is my greatest Curse; and Disappointments light upon you all. [Goes out.]

Court. This is your Mistress, Captain.

Spring. And I'gad she shall be mine now in spite of her Teeth: For since I find she can be civil upon occasion, I shall beat her into good Manners, if she refuses me. [Goes after her.]

Well. Every thing has fallen so much to your Advantage, that sure the Fault I made may be forgiven: What amends I have in my Power, I am ready to make you: My Liberty, of what I have to give, is what I value most; and that is yours, when you consent to let me make you mine.

Sight. This is too sudden to be serious: When you're in earnest, you won't need an Answer.

Wild. They are striking up a Peace on all Hands, Gentlemen; we shall be left out of the Treaty.

Love.

Love. There's yet a Lady to declare her self.

Mrs. Fri. *Mr. Friendall*, I'm sorry you thought it necessary to your Pleasures, to make me a Witness of my ill Usage: You know I can, and have past many things, some Women would think Wrongs, as such resent 'em, and return them too: But you can tell how I've behav'd my self.

Mr. Fri. Like a Gentlewoman always, Madam, and my Wife.

Mrs. Fri. The unjust World, let what will be the Cause of our Complaint (as there is Cause sufficient still at home) condemn us to a Slavery for Life: And if by Separation we get free, then all our Husband's Faults are laid on us: This hard Condition of a Woman's Fate, I've often weigh'd, therefore resolv'd to bear: And I have born; O! what have I not born? But Patience tires with such oppressing Wrongs, when they come home to triumph over me; and tell the Town how much I am despis'd.

Mr. Fri. I see we are both disappointed in this Affair of Matrimony; it is not the Condition you expected; nor has it the Advantages I propos'd. Now, Madam, since 'tis impossible to make it happy between us, let us even resolve to make it as easie as we can.

Mrs. Fri. That must be my Business now.

Mr. Fri. And mine too, I assure you: Look you, Madam, your own Relations shall provide for you at Pleasure, out of my Estate; I only article that I may have a Freedom of visiting you, in the Round of my Acquaintance.

Mrs. Fri. I must be still your Wife, and still unhappy.

Love. What Alteration this may make in my Fortune with her, I don't know; but I'm glad I have parted them.

Mr. Fri. Well, Gentlemen, I can't be very much pleas'd at the Recovery of my Liberty, I am only sorry *Witwoud* was the occasion of it: For an old blown-upon She-wit, is hardly an Intrigue to justify the Separation on my Side, or make a Man very vain of his Fortune.

Love. This you must all expect, who marry Fools; }
Unless you form 'em early in your Schools, }
And make 'em, what they were design'd for, Tools. }

[*Exeunt.*]

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. Barry.

M^R Character, not being much in Vogue,
Has drawn me in to speak the Epilogue:
But, pray conceive me right, not to disparage
That antient English Perquisite of Marriage;
Which, when the Priests first made all Pleasure Sin,
Faster than they could cheat us, drew us in
With Rites and Liberties of Cuckolding.
That us'd to be the Custom, and so common,
No Girl but wish'd her self a marry'd Woman.
Whether I've done my Husband right or no;
Most Women may be in the rights, that do:
Our Author does not set up for reforming,
Or giving hints to Fools who won't take warning:
He's pleas'd, that other People are pleas'd too;
To help to reap that Harvest which they sow:
For among all the Cuckolds of this Town,
Who show themselves, and are as daily shown,
Our Poets may make some of them their own.
You find in me what may excuse a Wife:
Compare at home the Picture with the Life,
And most of you may find a Friendall there;
And most of you more justly us'd than here:
Our Author has his Ends, if he can show,
The Women ne'er want Cause for what they do:
For, Ladies, all his Aim is pleasing you.
Some mettled Sparks, who nothing can withstand,
Your velvet-Fortune-Hunters, may demand,
Why, when the Means were in the Lady's Hand,
The Husband civil, and the Lover near,
No more was made of the Wife's Character?
Damn me, cries one, had I been Betterton,
And struts, and cocks, I know what I'd have done;
She should not ha' got clear of me so soon.
You only fear such Plays may spoil your Game:
But Flesh and Frailty always are the same:
And we shall still proceed in our old way.
For all that you can do, or Poet say.

F I N I S.